Everybody's Magazine

April 1917

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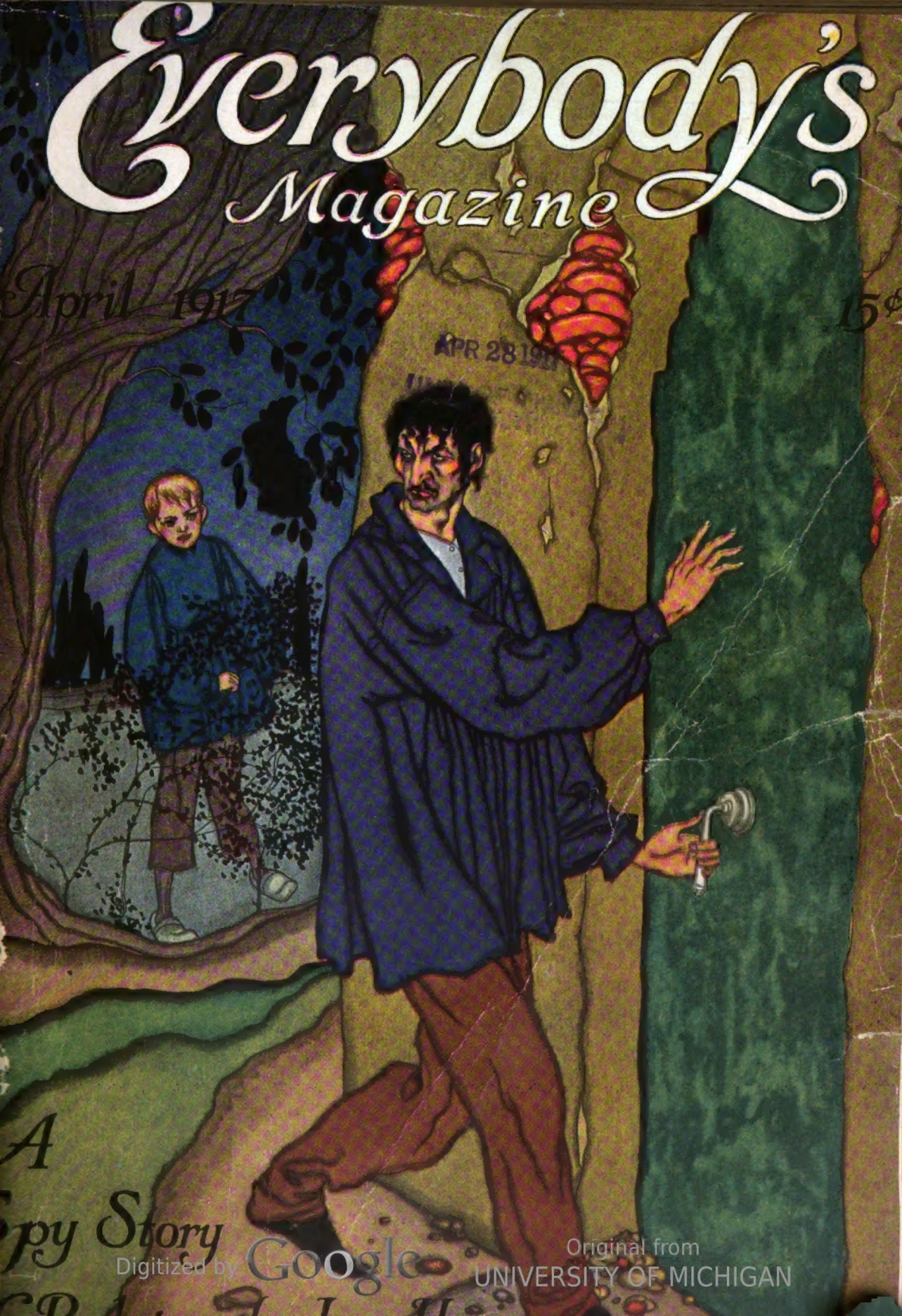

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NORTHCLIFFE

England's Unofficial War Steward

by ISAAC F. MARCOSSON

ONE day toward the close of the eighties a boy—he had barely passed his majority—set up an editorial establishment in a tiny room off Fleet Street in London and launched a weekly called *Answers*. He wrote the first issue himself. Half a dozen people would have crowded the modest sanctum; five hundred dollars was a fortune to its youthful ruler. Yet that little room was the modest outpost of the most militant newspaper influence that the world has ever known: the self-starting periodical was the first link in a chain of power that is to-day the Reorganizer of Government, the Mentor of Ministers, the Goad of Empire. It has been a dominant factor in the conduct of the Great War, as far as Great Britain is concerned.

For the boy who dreamed of editorial

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power in that six-by-ten office became Lord Northcliffe, Colossus of British Journalism. History presents no more astonishing or romantic spectacle than is afforded by this man—now barely turned fifty—who has vitalized printed expression until it has the force and meaning of a national message. Delane, the famous editor of the London *Times*, was a sort of unofficial trustee of the English people, confidant of cabinets, inspired newsgetter. But Northcliffe is a Premier without Portfolio. Speaking with a million tongues, he is the Watch-dog of Administrations, mightiest of all the Imperial Insurgents.

Insurgent! That is precisely the word for Northcliffe, because he has defied all tradition, smashed all precedent. Herein lies the first secret of his success. In a land where the fashion of the Fathers is the rule in thought and deed, he literally created a new school of mind and action. He is more American in outlook and performance than any of his contemporaries.

We of America point with pride to sentiment swayed by the press; the owner of the *Daily Mail* revolutionized the British shell output, overthrew a Government that was believed to be impregnable, forced out a Prime Minister who had withstood three years of war ordeal. All this, too, with a sense of personal detachment that is in sharp contrast with most of our own personally conducted uplift press campaigns.

Northcliffe has done all that Greeley or Dana desired, that Pulitzer planned, that Hearst attempted. In a word, he is the successful composite of what every great American publisher or editor wanted to be. Whether he is a crisis-monger, merchant of clamor, or prophet of panic and depression (as his enemies make him out); or whether he is the voice of democracy, safeguard of public liberty, custodian of the nation's welfare (as his friends and supporters attest), one fact is certain. He is the liveliest and most vital human entity in England; a man, alternately praised and damned, who, by the vast changes that he has wrought, must be regarded as the Warwick of this war. If he lived in America he would be a President-Maker.

I have seen Northcliffe in many moods: been with him where the earth shook with the rumble of guns; in the quiet of the English coast, where the sea beat on a lonely shore; on the newspaper battle-ground of London, when he was storming the citadels of privilege and power. Each time I saw some new facet in his nature, found some fresh manifestation of his genius.

Although he is a person of dazzling contrasts, there is no mystery about his make-up or his methods. Northcliffe has dramatized a prodigious personality and vivified a many-sided resource. He has proved that a publisher with initiative and commercial aptitude can make a group of newspapers not only an irresistible and country-wide force, but a very profitable enterprise as well.

The career of this man—as definitely self-made as Rockefeller or Edison—is a revelation of organized efficiency adapted to national service that is not without its significant lesson for the United States, as she stands at the threshold of her war travail.

A Prophet at Twenty

THERE must have been a spatter of ink at Northcliffe's baptism.

With conventional biographical details we are not concerned, although it is worth knowing that he was born Alfred Harmsworth; that he is the eldest of fourteen children; that his father was a brilliant barrister, and that he himself narrowly escaped exile into the Law; that his mother to-day has the peculiar distinction of being the only woman with four sons in Parliament: Northcliffe and Lord Rothermere in the House of Lords, and Cecil and Lester—both Radicals, by the way—in the House of Commons.

Northcliffe cut his magazine teeth when he was sixteen, and in a way that clearly forecast his enterprise. At school he started a magazine. It was his own particular idea. Even then—he was only fifteen—he had the courage and optimism which have been his two principal assets. In the first number you find the naive announcement that was the key-note of his career. It read: "I have it on the best authority that this paper is to be a marked success." Here is the forerunner of the tidal wave of advertisement that has made the names of the Northcliffe newspapers household words.

In the second number he published this: "I am glad to say that my prediction as to the success of the magazine proved correct." The boy-editor was the father of the coming man-magnate. Characteristic of the future controller of the *Mail* was the

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announcement the next month of a "Grand Extra Double Summer Holiday Seaside Number of the Magazine!"

From that moment Northcliffe literally splashed in publicity. The touchstone of success was his. At seventeen he was editing a weekly newspaper. Meanwhile he had toured the continent as a traveling secretary and divined then the possibilities of international complications of which he warned the world so persistently for many years. And not the least of these warnings was about the menace of war with Germany.

When anxious fathers come to Northcliffe to-day and ask how their sons

ALFRED HARMSWORTH AT THE OUTSET OF HIS CAREER.

should commence journalism, he invariably says: "The best possible education, a knowledge of French, and a period of initiation in a provincial newspaper office." He knows whereof he speaks because this, in a nutshell, was his own novitiate.

His provincial apprenticeship was as editor of a cycling paper at Coventry. Here he learned the whole newspaper job from composing-room to editorial. Like Ryan, Eastman, and Archbold, he wanted to go "on his own," so in his twenty-first year he started *Answers*. Then, as

INTERESTING. EXTRAORDINARY. AMUSING.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

ON EVERY SUBJECT UNDER THE SUN.

No. 1 (Entered at Stationers' Hall.) JUNE 2ND, 1888. (European Postage ½d.) Price 1d.

"ANSWERS" IS PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING
The trade may obtain "Answers" from all wholesale agents and from the office,
20, Paternoster Square,

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Interesting answers are inserted in the paper; others go by post.

A LIVING CLOCK.

Dr Willis mentions an idiot, who was accustomed to repeat the strokes of a clock near which he lived, with a loud voice. Afterwards having been removed into a parish where there was no church clock, he continued as before to call the hours successively, and this with so great accuracy, both as to the number of tolls, which he pretended to count, and as to the length of the intervening hours, that the family where he boarded conducted all their business by his proclamation of time.

ASS DRAWING WATER.

Some years ago an ass was employed at Carisbrooke Castle, in the Isle of Wight, in drawing water by a large wheel from a very deep well, supposed to have been sunk by the Romans. When his keeper wanted water, he would say to the ass, "Tom, my boy, I want water, get into the wheel, my good lad," which Thomas immediately performed with an alacrity and sagacity that would have done credit to a nobler animal; and no doubt he knew the precise number of times necessary for the wheel to revolve upon its axis to complete his labour, because every time he brought the bucket to the surface of the well, he constantly stopped and turned round his head to observe the moment when his master laid hold of the bucket to draw it towards him, because he had then a nice evolution to make, either to recede or advance a little.

SILK STOCKINGS.

Mezeray, the French historian, acquaints us that in 1559 Henry II. of France was the first who wore silk stockings in that country, at the marriage of his sister with the Duke of Savoy. They are nevertheless said to have been worn in this country earlier, both by Henry VIII. and Edward VI. The latter was presented with a pair of long Spanish silk stockings by Sir Thomas Gresham.

Howell relates in his "History of the World" that Queen Elizabeth, in the third year of her reign, 1561, was presented with a pair of black knit silk stockings by her silk woman, Mrs. Montague, and thenceforth she never wore cloth ones any more.

ORIGIN OF GROG.

The British sailors had always been accustomed to drink their allowance of brandy or rum clear, till Admiral Vernon ordered those under his command to mix it with water. The innovation gave great offence to the sailors, and, for a time, rendered the commander very unpopular among them. The Admiral, at that time, wore a grogram coat, for which reason they nicknamed him "Old Grog," etc., hence, by degrees, the mixed liquor he constrained them to, universally obtained among them the name of 'Grog.'

HAIR POWDER.

Hair powder was introduced by some ballad singers at the fair of St. Germains, in 1614. In the beginning of the reign of George I. only two ladies wore powder in their hair, and they were pointed at for their singularity. And at the coronation of George II. there were only two hairdressers in London. But in 1795, it was calculated that there were in the kingdom of Great Britain fifty thousand hairdressers; and supposing each of them to use one pound of flour in a day, this upon an average amounted to 18,250,000 pounds in a year, sufficient to make 5,314,280 quarters loaves.

ECCENTRIC CHARACTER.

The Rev. Mr Hagamore, of Catsbogg, Leicestershire, was a very singular character. He died the 1st of January, 1776, possessed of the following effects, viz.—£700 per annum, and £1,000 in money, which (he dying intestate) fell to a ticket-porter in London. He kept one servant of each sex, whom he locked up every night. His last employment of an evening was to go round his premises, let loose his dogs, and fire his gun. He lost his life as follows. Going one morning to let out his servants, the dogs fawned upon him suddenly, and threw him into a pond, where he was found breast high. His servants heard his call for assistance, but being locked up could not lend him any. He had 30 gowns and cassocks, 100 pair of breeches, 100 pair of boots, 100 pair of shoes, 8 wigs (yet always wore his own hair), 56 dogs, 80 waggons and carts, 80 ploughs (and used none), 50 saddles, and furniture for the carriage, 30 wheelbarrows, 80 many walking sticks that a toyman in Leicester Fields offered £8 for them, 60 horses and mares, 200 pickaxes, 200 spades and shovels, 74 ladders, and 249 razors.

A PAGE FROM THE FIRST NUMBER OF HARMSWORTH'S EARLY VENTURE.

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now, his editorial impulse was to provide information.

In those venturesome days Northcliffe solved at once and at first-hand the vexatious problem of distribution. He personally made the round of the news-agents to inquire if they had sufficient copies of his publication on hand. To-day exactly fifty thousand news-agents handle the sixty Northcliffe magazines and newspapers, with their total weekly circulation of twenty millions, which have grown out of the unpretentious weekly written with his own hand.

At twenty-two Alfred Harmsworth was a successful man of affairs, head of a growing business that was on its way to become the richest publishing enterprise in the world. Long before he turned thirty, he had a string of nearly twoscore publications ranging from *Comic Cuts* to the *London Magazine*.

Daily Mail Copyright War Service

LORD NORTHCLIFFE, COLOSSUS OF BRITISH JOURNALISM.

Just as he was about to leave his strenuous twenties, Northcliffe took his first plunge into daily journalism. With his brother, now Lord Rothermere, he bought the Cinderella of London newspaperdom, the *Evening News*. The Conservative party had dumped more than two million dollars into it without result. It was the joke of the profession. Wags of the Radical press amused themselves by having its shares sold in bushel baskets, and then informing the world that the shares had brought a few cents each. Northcliffe put the unerring probe of his swift insight into this moribund paper, diagnosed its trouble as lack of continuity of policy and managerial control, and in less than six months it had the public confidence and was a success.

Northcliffe was now rich; he was booked for a baronetcy; he might well be content. But his restless energy, coupled with consuming ambition, spurred him on to the spectacular and sensational creation of the *Daily Mail*.

In America we have come into an era when the afternoon newspaper is the swift, rapid-fire distributer of news, with a constantly increasing following. In England the morning paper remains the heavy gun. Northcliffe had long cherished the idea of a morning paper, and the hour arrived when that dream was to be realized—and with it an uprooting of the whole English press-publicity field.

With the *Daily Mail* Northcliffe literally hurled a thunderbolt into the serene heaven of the British reading public. To understand clearly the revolution that he wrought, you must first know that up to the launching of the *Daily Mail*, the English press was

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ponderous and pontifical, which means that it was dull and respectable. The editors of the so-called "Great Dailies" were aloof and inaccessible—mostly "cave-dwellers"—who lived in antiquated seclusion. Contact with the multitude was a coarse and vulgar thing; intercourse with the staff was by letter and memorandum. Reporting had become a rite: there was no stimulus or reward for ambition and enterprise. Papers were supposed to be written "by gentlemen for gentlemen."

Northcliffe changed all this. But first he did a characteristic thing. Analyze the phenomenal success of the *Daily Mail* and you find that it was due primarily to preparation and the ceaseless initiative of the founder. It is an illuminating lesson in preparedness.

Northcliffe was a year getting ready. The fledgling paper was issued daily, almost complete in every respect, for three months before a single copy was sold to the public. In these three months Northcliffe was scouring the world for men, appraising material, sounding tendencies, getting ready to deliver a thrust that, when delivered, carried conviction and knowledge. If there is one thing above all others that stands out in Northcliffe's life it is *thoroughness*.

The *Daily Mail* was geared to the march of events and became an animate force. It "got over" from the start not so much by what it *thought* as by what it *did*. It was the first important half-penny morning paper in Great Britain—that price itself being a most radical departure. Northcliffe paid the highest wages and drew about him the best available writers. Under his régime the editor ceased to be a hermit, the reporter became an essential cog in the newspaper machine.

The *Daily Mail* was an immediate sensation, and it has never got out of the habit. Its enemies said that Northcliffe had found journalism a profession and made of it a trade—that he had basely commercialized a noble calling. They quite forgot the fact that even the most idealistic altruism fails when it is not put on a box-office basis.

Regardless of party affiliation, most of the English journals denounced the intruder, predicting dire failure. To quote Northcliffe: "Newspaper warfare is very like trench warfare. Each party sees very little of the other. Both believe in gigantic enemy losses!" In the famous coalition against Northcliffe, however, the casualties were all on the other side. He was the first publisher in England to have a circulation of a million for a daily.

No phase of the development of the *Daily Mail* was more characteristic of the Northcliffe policy than the reproduction of the London edition *in replica* every morning two hundred miles away at Manchester. The whole text is telegraphed each night over private wires to Manchester, with the result that the *Mail* is on the breakfast-table at Edinburgh and Aberdeen and other remote points to which it is rushed by special trains, at the same moment as the local press. The same feat on a minor scale is duplicated in Paris every morning, where the Englishman can get a *Daily Mail*—(Continental Edition)—served up with his *petit déjeuner*. With this stroke Northcliffe practically wiped the competition of English newspapers in Paris off the map. Northcliffe papers succeed because they radiate the vitality of the man himself. He knows what the public wants. Since public taste is a fickle and sensitive plant, it takes real genius to keep pace with its moods. After his famous exposé of the shell shortage, when his name was a hissing and a by-word, and when people were burning his papers in the streets, he knew their minds better than they did. His instinct told him that they would be dissatisfied with the conduct of the war, and he was proved right. As usual he was far ahead of the times.

The world knows that he laid bare the ammunition deficiency and attacked Kitchener's short-sightedness. But it does not know the way this historic upheaval was precipitated, because I now tell the exact circumstance for the first time. I use it because it reveals the very mainspring of the Northcliffe journalistic machine.

In the *Times* Northcliffe had published the fact that the British troops in France were impotent before the German guns because of the famine of high explosives. The *Times* had the facts and spoke with the authority of confirmed information. There was no response from Government or public. It takes a great deal, you know, to stir the British mind. So Northcliffe proceeded to give it the jolt of its history.

One morning in May, 1915, the telephone-bell rang in the office of Thomas Marlowe, editor of the *Daily Mail*, at Carmelite House. "The Chief wants to see you," was the

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message that came over the wire. Northcliffe is simply "Chief" to his associates.

Marlowe went up to the huge book-lined study with its fish and game trophies and, for all that, its distinct suggestion of meditative seclusion. Northcliffe sat deep down in an upholstered chair, his big head forward, his broad shoulders squared, the picture of strength. He handed Marlowe a manuscript, saying: "Read this."

Marlowe read the four typewritten pages. They contained the now famous editorial:

"THE TRAGEDY OF THE SHELLS—KITCHENER'S GRAVE MISTAKE."

Marlowe looked up amazed. "Do you realize that this will be a terrific shock, that it will shatter an idol?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Northcliffe grimly; "but isn't it true?"

"Yes," was the answer. And the editorial blazed forth the next morning, kindling a fire of abuse, revolt, indignation, even ostracism. But the Northcliffe papers stuck to the task.

The result was the Ministry of Munitions.

When Northcliffe asked Marlowe the question: "Isn't it true?" he disclosed the one unfailing test that he applies to every cause or creed. Most London editors, however, ask, "What effect will this have?" Or, "How will the party like it?"

With a concrete incident I can show another reason why Northcliffe and his ramified interests have forged ahead. He once met a sub-editor in the corridor of the *Daily Mail* building and asked him how he was getting along.

"Splendidly, thank you," was the reply.

"How long have you been with me?"

"Six months, my Lord."

"What money are you getting?"

"Seven pounds a week."

"Are you happy and contented?"

"Yes, but I have lots of leisure."

"Then you are not the man for me. I don't want any member of my staff to be happy and contented on seven pounds a week."

He himself has never been content with man or machine when he could get a better one.

Northcliffe is one of the few publishers who not only frankly admit a mistake but profit by it. His experience with the *Daily Mirror* is typical. He has always believed that women have definite economic rights. He has not only given them the largest possible opportunities on his newspapers and periodicals, but has made one of them a director in the Amalgamated Press, the company which publishes his magazines.

He launched the *Daily Mirror* as a publication by and for women, and it hung fire. In an article entitled "How I Lost Five Hundred Thousand Dollars" he made a clean breast of his failure. He said: "I had for many years a theory that a daily newspaper for women was in urgent request, and I started one. This belief cost me five hundred thousand dollars. I found out that I was beaten. Women do not want a daily paper of their own. It was another instance of failures made by mere man in diagnosing woman's needs. Some people say that a woman never really knows what she wants. It is certain she knew what she didn't want. She didn't want the *Daily Mirror*."

Northcliffe then converted the publication into an illustrated daily for men and women and it became a best-seller—one of his most valuable properties.

His purchase of the controlling interest in the *Times* was a brilliant *coup*—and likewise an episode in English history, for the reason that "The Thunderer," as it is called, is part and parcel of British life. Abraham Lincoln once said that next to the Mississippi River the London *Times* was the most powerful thing in the world. When it was announced that the owner of the two near-"yellow" papers, the *Daily Mail* and the *Evening News*, had acquired a controlling interest in the most staid and conservative of newspapers, Britain was shocked and grieved. The country stood aghast at the profanation. Here was high crime against the sacred traditions.

What happened? Northcliffe not only maintained the integrity of *Times* dignity but made the paper more useful, constructive, and interesting.

"To Foresee Is to Rule"

WITH the *Times*, the various British and Continental editions of the *Daily Mail*, the *Evening News*, the *Weekly Despatch*, Northcliffe wields an almost incomparable influence. Through them he can reach every degree of English society from proletariat to prince. No wonder he has built up a following more permanent and powerful than that of any statesman.

These battalions of print would be futile

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LORD NORTHCLIFFE'S MOTHER, WHO HAS FOUR SONS IN PARLIAMENT.

without a definite and driving policy. In shaping this policy he has impressed his two most vivid and outstanding qualities—courage and foresight.

It takes an almost Spartan heroism to fly in the face of British opinion. This Northcliffe has done repeatedly. More than once—and especially in the Kitchener and Asquith assaults—he defied both fate and fortune. His life has often been threatened. During the shell crisis he had to go about with a body-guard.

Most men who do things in a big or comprehensive way fly some motto or maxim from the mast-head of their career. It usually sums up their greatest gift. In the

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case of Northcliffe you have it embraced in a single sentence from Pascal:

"To foresee is to rule."

Any one can see tendencies. It is the obvious thing. But to see to-day what everybody will accept and believe to be true six months or a year hence, is the highest expression of journalistic genius. This is exactly what Northcliffe has done so many times that his whole newspaper life is a long succession of predictions, at first startling and sensational, but almost invariably accepted as commonplace in time. Let me illustrate:

When he founded the *Daily Mail* he sent many correspondents into Germany. He began then his persistent preachment of the Teutonic Menace, of the inevitableness of the great European war. He based his forecast on solid facts, because he was maintaining a Secret Service in Germany and Turkey—a Service that, maintained continuously since that time, has provided the British Government with more important news than have most of its diplomats and agents.

Take Aviation. In 1906 Northcliffe saw Santos Dumont hop one hundred feet with an aeroplane. On the spot he became convinced not only that flying was the coming sport, but that airmanship would be a great factor in future warfare. He offered a prize of fifty thousand dollars for the first mechanical flight from London to Manchester in twenty-four hours with not more than two stops. England thought he was insane. The offer became the jest and joke of press and public. *Punch*, for instance, immediately offered ten million dollars to any one who could fly to Mars!

One of Northcliffe's staff wrote an editorial on Aviation, saying that while it was bound to come, it would be long delayed because all progress is slow. The next morning he received a thumping telegram from his chief, saying: "Stop writing such rot. The aeroplane will come much quicker than you think. Be optimistic about it."

The first and most loyal friend that Orville and Wilbur Wright had in Europe was Northcliffe, and he aided them in every possible way.

Take the question of paper supply. Any layman knows that paper is an all-important financial aspect of newspaper and periodical enterprise. The yearly consumption of paper by all the Northcliffe interests is greater than that of any other printing concern. Owing to the great demand on the forests of the United States, Canada, and Scandinavia, a paper famine—as the present scarcity proves—is no impossible contingency. With his extraordinary foresight Northcliffe realized that when the inevitable European conflict should come, Sweden, which produces the bulk of European pulp, would likely be friendly to the Germans and therefore a negligible quantity in the paper situation. He therefore set about to provide his own supply.

He chose the oldest of British dominions, Newfoundland, where he secured a tract of three thousand square miles. Twelve years ago his pioneers laid out the site of a new town on the edge of the wilderness, close to a great waterfall. To-day that giant waterfall has been harnessed, a vast plant has been built, paper and pulp go by private steamship lines to private docks and more mills at Gravesend, and then on to feed the hungry presses. It is an unbroken chain that begins with the felled tree in the snowy wood and ends with the finished periodical in the hands of the reader.

That verdant site wrested from the primeval forest scarcely a decade ago is now Grand Falls, second city of Newfoundland in population and importance: a flourishing community with churches, schools, hospitals, a hotel, bank, and a club.

England's Unofficial War Steward

ALL these evidences of Northcliffe's foresight pale before the real dramatization of it which came with the Great War. In its mighty crucible he found the great opportunity which made him a world-figure and established him as Britain's Unofficial War Steward.

It took him just three days to see what most of the British public did not realize, namely, that it would be a long war and that the country was absolutely unprepared. He saw, too, that compulsory service must come. With his fight for conscription he struck the first blow at complacent officialdom. As time sped on, with its record of sacrifice and slaughter, he sensed the need of a complete reorganization of British war preparation at home. So he let loose the full broadside of all his printed power, and his guns have thundered ever since.

You already know what he did in the matter of Kitchener and the shell shortage;

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you have heard of the crisis which he brought about which ended the Asquith régime and installed Lloyd George as Prime Minister. This revolution was probably the most complete and effective ever wrought by a group of newspapers. It ended Government by compromise and delay: it forged the hammer that began to pound the Germans.

Strip away the glamour of the whole Asquith upheaval and you discover that it was merely a translation of the Northcliffe system of efficient team-work into terms of national administration. Northcliffe demanded a small, compact Cabinet that would get things done.

He explained his idea to me in simple and graphic fashion. We were walking along the Kentish coast one bleak day last January. Overhead whirred a giant army aeroplane; far out at sea a gray fleet rode at anchor; from across the Channel came the rumble of the guns in Flanders. I asked him why he had fought so hard for a small Cabinet. He stopped suddenly and said in that swift, sharp way that he has:

"Could twenty-three Lincolns run your Government during the Civil War? Could twenty-three Grants win it?"

"No," I replied.

"Well," he snapped, "there's the answer."

Since the beginning of the war the famous council-room of the *Times* has been in reality a part of the British Government. "The Conference," essentially an American newspaper institution, which Northcliffe introduced into England, is held every afternoon at a quarter-to-five o'clock in a large, square, high-pitched chamber in the *Times* Building, from the two windows of which you can see the huge gray and white dome of St. Paul's looming like the Jungfrau over the Grindelwald Valley. Around an octagonal table sit the men who made the *Times* and who also make history. At the head sits Geoffrey Robinson, the editor, with Northcliffe in the third seat from him. It is really a Cabinet meeting, for often the *Times* gets news later and more valuable than does the Government itself.

From this room stretches the long finger that touches the pulse of war-racked Europe. Policy is shaped not only for the paper, but for Britain. Here was planned the famous attack on Kitchener; here developed the War Cabinet idea. Out of these conferences came a dozen epochal campaigns that changed the whole course of the British conduct of the war—none more vital than the overthrow of the Asquith Administration.

At these meetings, especially those held in crucial hours, you see Northcliffe in action. It is a study in contrasts to watch him. He crouches in his chair, the intent listener, or leans forward as the sharp, pithy, and pointed interrogator. With a single question at an expert he gets at the heart of the whole business.

Every great national crisis needs a practical man. England found him in Northcliffe.

It is no secret that Northcliffe's judgment of men influenced the making of the new British Cabinet which is charged with the task of winning the war. Largely due to him, it includes practical men of affairs. War is the hugest business in the world, but it is a business nevertheless. It means merchandising with men instead of goods. Thanks to Northcliffe, you find such ministers to-day as Sir Joseph Maclay, the Shipping Controller, the one-time captain of a tramp steamer; Lord Devonport, Food Controller, who served his time behind a grocery counter, and now owns a chain of people's stores; Sir Albert Stanley, President of the Board of Trade, a self-made traction expert, who learned the game in American systems.

Northcliffe might have had any post in the gift of the Government, but he has steadfastly refused. He knows that to take office would weaken his power. Before the Asquith reorganization he was widely mentioned for Food Controller. He resented the suggestion, saying: "I could never afford to work with twenty-three men (that was the original number of Cabinet Ministers) who are always late."

Many people believe that Northcliffe is the power behind Lloyd George: that the Premier is his intimate associate. As a matter of fact, Northcliffe has scarcely seen Lloyd George a dozen times. He prefers to know men by their work rather than by personal contact. It is part of his larger policy of impersonal journalism.

The New British Journalistic Creed

MANY Americans—and we are a great newspaper-consuming public—wonder how Northcliffe is able to fashion a journal into a national force and make and unmake

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Camera portrait by Mad[illegible]

LADY NORTHCLIFFE.

governments with it, a feat utterly impossible in the United States. Just as there is no mystery about Northcliffe himself, so there is no magic about this performance.

He is able to make his newspapers vital and far-reaching agents because, first of all, he has a coherent public, speaking a common language, with a common heritage and ideal. We, on the other hand, have a huge melting-pot of a nation with many conflicting nationalities. Northcliffe is able to express the people's mind, to visualize it and to deliver his message with simplicity and reiteration. He once said to me: "Napoleon was right when he declared that the word 'repetition' was the most useful in the language. You can not repeat a thing too often." He keeps on hammering until he gets action.

Another reason why Northcliffe can sound a note that is caught up throughout the Kingdom is that Great Britain is small. Experience shows, from Horace Greeley's day down, that no paper published in a seaport like New York can influence a whole vast continent that stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

This brings us naturally to the Northcliffe journalistic creed, which invites an inevitable comparison with the American school. I asked him to define his idea of newspaper control and he said: "I agree with the elder Bennett who said that no man can control a newspaper unless he sleeps on the premises. This is why I keep a bed at the *Times*."

This means that Northcliffe is incessantly on the job. When he is not in London he is in the closest possible communication with his papers.

He believes that the conduct of a newspaper should be impersonal. "When a newspaper controller knows a great many people," he says, "he is the object of as much wire-pulling as the Prime Minister. The more people you know, the greater becomes the difficulty of acting impersonally. I see public men only at their offices. If you know only a few people you can strike hard at many. There is a great deal of truth in Charles A. Dana's theory that the newspaper owner must be something of a hermit."

Ask Northcliffe what he thinks the ideal newspaper should be and he will put it like this:

"Let one man—the controller—be in final authority; give him the best experts obtainable and let them alone. A newspaper should be the consensus of the best brains of the best specialists—the clearing-house of the quickest and most accurate news from all theatres of world event; it should have the judgment of daily consultation. Make the paper pay its way regardless of advertising, and independent of everybody. If readers don't like it they can burn it. If it does not suit advertisers, they can stay out."

Seek the parallel with Northcliffe in the United States and you find the task fruitless, because no American publisher or editor has ever wielded such an authority as his. For the purpose of comparison, however, the nearest approach is William Randolph Hearst. Why has Northcliffe realized all that Hearst desired?

First and foremost, Northcliffe is a born reporter and Hearst is not. In the second place, one is well informed; he believes in a policy of "Go and See" (he has been to the

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THE *TIMES* BUILDING, IN WHICH IS THE FAMOUS COUNCIL-ROOM.

NO AMERICAN PUBLISHER OR EDITOR HAS EVER WIELDED SUCH AUTHORITY.

front nine times), while the other is fundamentally ignorant of large affairs, and seldom takes the trouble to get first-hand details personally.

The Northcliffe press is constructive, while the Hearst papers are organs of unrest. Northcliffe is a statesman with journalistic instincts who pursues a consistent policy; Hearst is a manufacturer of newspapers with a policy of drift.

But the largest difference perhaps lies in the fact that Hearst has sought political office, has let himself be caught up in the whirlpool of bitter partisanship, so that when he makes an appeal it can only be regarded as a special plea. His influence therefore is greatly lessened. On the other hand, Northcliffe has never sought a public post: he is free to act and speak. He knows that the moment he assumed office his power to effect large national reforms would cease. In all the great campaigns that have made him the storm-center of violent controversy, he has disregarded party lines; it has always been a question of "Efficiency and Service First."

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Independence has made his Insurgency possible.

Don't delude yourself with the idea that Northcliffe's masterful march is along a rosy path of public acclaim. No man in recent years has been so bitterly arraigned. He is stamped as a "sensationalist"; "yellow journalist"; "scandalizer of public and press morals." But he has thrived on his enemies. Fifty per cent. of the hostility toward him is directly due to the jealousy of his competitors; twenty-five to the prejudice born of staid British resentment at what is termed his violation of newspaper morality, while the remaining twenty-five per cent. follows the wreaking of his terrible power on those that have crossed his path. Like E. H. Harriman, he never forgets an affront, never forgives a wound. He is as sensitive as a woman.

The Man Behind the Action

AND now for the real Northcliffe enigma. The man who wields the greatest unofficial power in Britain, who can change the conduct of the war, re-create a Cabinet, and make the fortune of artist or author with the stroke of a pen, is personally the least known of all the English men of mark. Go behind the curtain which masks him and you find a many-sided individual. I have seen Morgan, Ryan, Perkins, Harriman—all the human dynamos of the frenzied power-plant of American energy-at-work. None surpasses Northcliffe in galvanic effort or in concentration. It is his first link with them.

He is big of bulk, with smooth, mobile, massive, yet boyish face, not unlike Napoleon's, and with the familiar lock of hair that hangs low over his forehead. His eyes, large and luminous, leap swiftly from grave to gay. His looks reflect his moods, for he is a multiple personality, as tender and yielding in repose as he is ruthless and unrelenting in action. Courage, capacity, imagination, are his heritage. He brings his friend Cecil Rhodes strongly to mind. Both Sons of Empire, they had a kinship of vision, a community of achievement. Rhodes thought in terms of continents; Northcliffe's perspective is the world.

Like every man who has achieved a career, Northcliffe's work takes precedence over all else. The only time he forgets it or is away from it is when he sleeps. He has a method all his own, because he divides the day into two scientific halves. He begins his labors at five o'clock in the morning in Summer, and at six in the winter. From his bed he dictates plans and policies. Before the average Englishman is out of his morning tub, Northcliffe has done a day's work. He has read all his own newspapers and marked them with criticisms; has outlined the program for his evening paper; he has talked over the telephone with members of his staff and picked up the thread of things that have happened through the night.

Like Harriman, who had a telephone in every room of his house, including the bathroom, Northcliffe is never away from some sort of swift communication with his newspapers. Once I was motoring with him down to one of his country places. We had scarcely left the lights of London behind us when he suddenly ordered his chauffeur to stop at the next post-office.

"There is something I must telephone to the *Times*," he said. It was a characteristic act.

At eleven o'clock, when he is in the country (and he does much of his work there), he knocks off, and plays golf until luncheon. Whenever possible he sleeps from two until four. After that he sees people. The world comes to him, most often to that historic office at the *Times*, with its superb Georgian marble mantelpiece, its stately paneled walls, its high windows, through which pulses the roar of London. I have known him to receive a score of people in a single afternoon, yet so great is his concentration that every visitor believes that his business is the one absorbing topic in Northcliffe's mind.

He works just as he talks and walks—swiftly and eagerly. Nothing ruffles him. He dictated his book, "The Rise of the *Daily Mail*," in the garden at Elmwood, while a German aeroplane was dropping bombs in the neighboring town of Margate.

There is one definite rule in Northcliffe's scheme of life that the overworked American millionaire may well heed. Save in a great national crisis, his work for the day ends when the time for dinner begins. No guest in any of Northcliffe's houses will talk "shop" from that moment on. Then you see Northcliffe the Boy—the dynamic Peter Pan who will never grow up!

I like to recall an evening at Elmwood,

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the smallest of his country places, but the one to which he is most attached by sentimental ties, because he bought it out of his first large earnings. There were only a few

ALFRED HARMSWORTH, IN HIS YOUTH, HAD A REPUTATION FOR DARING AMONG CYCLISTS OF ANOTHER GENERATION. HE IS ON THE EXTREME RIGHT IN THE PHOTOGRAPH.

of us down there. After dinner Northcliffe said: "Let's have the phonograph." He stretched himself on a huge couch, puffed away at a great cigar of the dreadnought size that J. P. Morgan used to smoke, and luxuriated in American rag-time that ranged from "Down in Tennessee" to "Alexander's Rag-time Band."

I started to tell him the story of Irving Berlin. He stopped me and said smilingly: "I have met him. Isn't it extraordinary that he should write all that music without knowing a note?" Here you get one of those quick and unexpected revelations of Northcliffe's amazing fund of knowledge. He has met nearly everybody worth knowing, and he never forgets. Because he gives much information he receives much. He is the type of big man who always interviews the interviewer.

When you go about the various Northcliffe business establishments, the first thing that strikes you is the youth of the men in high places. The editor of the *Times* is barely forty; before the war called them, directors of Northcliffe's immense interests were in their early twenties. This is part of the Northcliffe system. He was head of a large business at twenty-two: he therefore knows the strength and resource of the young and fruitful years. The first two questions that he hurls at any applicant for service with him are: "How old are you?" and "What can you do?"

Being efficient himself, he detests incompetency. Sometimes you hear it said that Northcliffe sucks people's brains dry and flings them aside. If this is true, they are at least well paid during the absorption process, for he pays the highest journalistic wage in the world. One of his principal business associates gets a salary as large as that of the President of the United States, as much as Hearst pays Arthur Brisbane. "Make your employees contented," is his rule. Adequate compensation is the key to it. It is a good investment. Like most successful employers, he is deeply concerned about his people. On busy mornings when it is impossible for him to read all of his immense mail, I have heard him say: "Run through it quickly to see if there are any letters from my workpeople." They always have his eye.

The net result is a loyal organization and a lack of the "office politics" so common in

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many American newspaper establishments.

Whether it is the Irish in him or not, Northcliffe is impulsive and volatile, very human and very kindly. Nor is he without a keen sense of humor.

He wanted a taxi at the *Times* office. When he reached the street the door-man told him it was impossible to get one, but that he had secured a hansom.

"Where shall I go, my Lord?" asked the cabby.

"To the nearest taxi stand," said Northcliffe.

Like most busy and successful men, Northcliffe always finds time for everything. He is the personification of punctuality. When he says he will come for you, it means that he will be there when the clock is striking the hour.

His dominant personal trait is action. He is seldom in the same place for two consecutive days. This does not mean that he is trying to hide, but oddly enough he finds relaxation in movement. In one week I was with him at four different establishments, three in the country that ranged from what he calls a "sleeping-box," perched high on a lovely hill in Surrey, and the only place perhaps where he gets complete seclusion (he calls it "No Hall—Nowhere"), to Sutton Place, a noble estate where Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth and Cardinal Wolsey often sojourned.

An Adopted Americanism

I HAVE kept for the last the phase of Northcliffe which is of most concern to us —the thing that for the want of a better phrase might be called his adopted Americanism. No living Englishman knows or understands us so well. He talks to Americans in terms of America. When he wants to illustrate society, for example, he employs Fifth Avenue and Newport, not Belgrave Square and Mayfair; he links the Bowery with Whitechapel; Wall Street with Lombard. He is first-aid to the hungry oversea writers; their best friend at court. When the real story of how the British cause was brought home to the American reading public is told, it will be found that Northcliffe's service to our writing men and women has aided more than nearly all the official agencies combined.

Northcliffe is intelligent enough not to be a strong believer in much of the "Hands Across the Sea" talk. He considers that the chief community of ideals between the Britisher and the American lies in their mutual love of fair play, their adherence to principles of freedom achieved in the English Revolution of 1640 and the American Revolution of 1776.

I was with Northcliffe during those stirring days when Germany launched her final program of submarine frightfulness and when we broke with the Kaiser. We talked much of the great need of preparedness in general; of our own lack of readiness in particular. I told him of the efforts made by EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE to incorporate military training in the high-school systems.

"Splendid," he said. Then he continued:

"The United States has been an overrich corporation that invited trouble among hungry competitors. Competition between nations takes the form of war. If England had had a mild military insurance there would have been no war. We were like you, eternally talking about money, business, or territorial expansion. The Germans fell upon us. The curious fact about life is that the richer people become the more they preach peace. It pleases them and their pockets. We were all purse and no fist.

"Your position was even worse because, much to the annoyance of the multitude, a certain number among us did insist upon a modern navy, although some of our richest people, as well as those most politically strong, advocated a reduction of the fleet.

"This war has shown that expert officers can soon train mobs into armies, provided that armies may come in the air and may one day come under the water. If in the early days of the war, the Germans had had the brains to land fifty thousand troops from aeroplane on England, and dig themselves in instead of fooling with gas-bag Zeppelins, we should have had a trouble very difficult to eradicate.

"If we had spent as much on the right kind of preparedness each year as we now spend in two weeks of the war (our daily expenditure is thirty million dollars), this particular war could not have happened!"

What does the future hold for Lord Northcliffe? He has played such an important part in the drama of the war that he must inevitably loom large in the vast readjustment of peace. Whatever he may do, you may be sure of one thing: He will be the Statesman-Journalist, insurgent.

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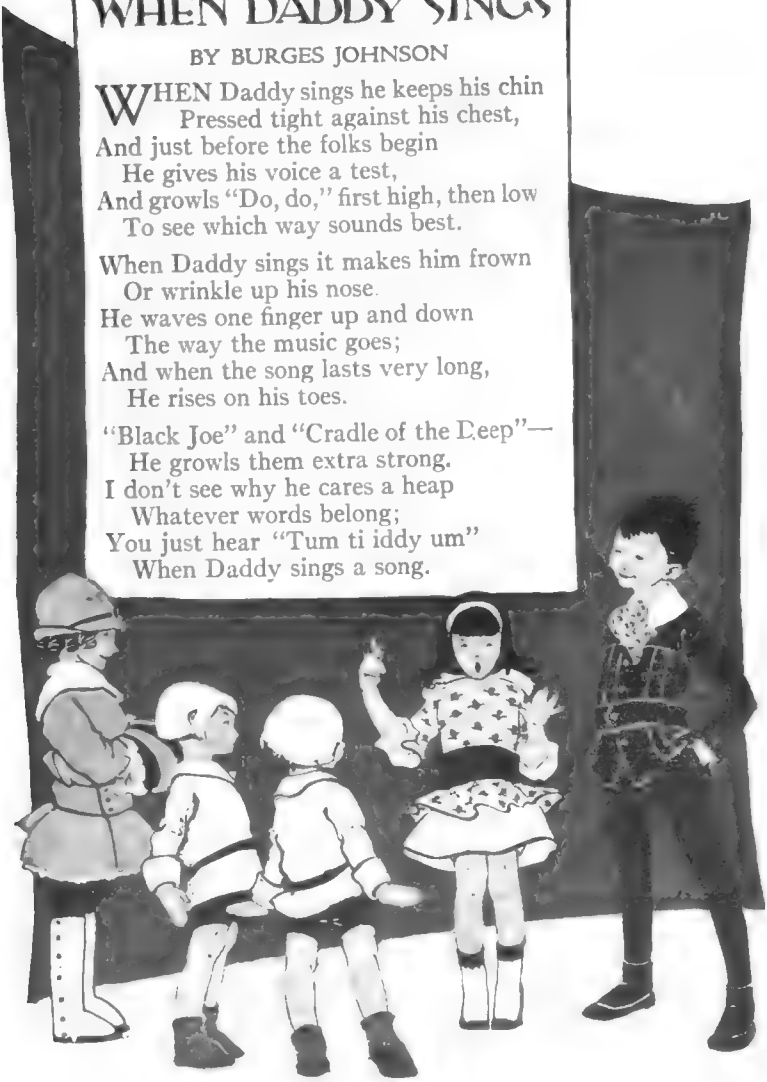
WHEN DADDY SINGS

BY BURGES JOHNSON

WHEN Daddy sings he keeps his chin
Pressed tight against his chest,
And just before the folks begin
He gives his voice a test,
And growls "Do, do," first high, then low
To see which way sounds best.

When Daddy sings it makes him frown
Or wrinkle up his nose.
He waves one finger up and down
The way the music goes;
And when the song lasts very long,
He rises on his toes.

"Black Joe" and "Cradle of the Deep"—
He growls them extra strong.
I don't see why he cares a heap
Whatever words belong;
You just hear "Tum ti iddy um"
When Daddy sings a song.



Drawing by Julia Daniels

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PETIT JEAN

A Spy Story of the Belgian Front

By Ian Hay

AUTHOR OF "THE FIRST HUNDRED THOUSAND"

ILLUSTRATED BY RALPH BARTON

UNCANNILY CLEAN, AND DRESSED IN HIS SUNDAY SUIT, SUPPLEMENTED BY A LARGE UMBRELLA.

UPON the Belgian large-scale ordnance map the place is described as *Fme du Gde Etang*—which, being expanded and interpreted, means "The Farm by the Big Pond." But after the war had been in progress for a few weeks the British Army Ordnance Department took the map in hand and issued a revised version. In this, the most prominent features of the landscape were rechristened for the benefit of the untutored barbarians from beyond the sea who were ignorantly stemming the tide of Kultur in that district. Hence the original imposing title was converted, quite simply, to "Cow Corpse Farm."

The farm's godmother had rendered this title inevitable by expiring (from causes unknown) right in the fairway to the barn where B Company was billeted. The half platoon who were "warned" for the funeral—which occupied the greater part of an August day, and was attended by several thousand bluebottles—held a christening party in the *Estaminet du Clef des Champs* directly after the obsequies; and the title there selected (shorn of an adjective unsuitable for cartographical purposes) was ultimately immortalized in the official map.

Within the precincts of the farm resided:

First, Madame *la fermière*—variously referred to as "Madame," by the company commander; "the old gel," by the officers' mess cook; and "the lady of the 'ouse," by the courteous rank and file. She was like a hundred other farmers' wives in Flanders to-day—hard working, cheerful, voluble; "carrying on" with amazing courage during the absence of her men-folk; and ready, at any hour between 4 A. M. and midnight, to cook you an omelet or charge you for a breakage.

Secondly, Mesdemoiselles Hélène and Marguerite, Madame's daughters. The two girls worked unceasingly about the farm or fields. Doubtless they would have worked equally hard if there had been no war; for in Belgium, which is the most overcrowded and overcultivated little country in the world, you have to rise up extremely early to make a living at all. They were a cheerful and friendly pair, and Hélène was pretty—especially upon a Sunday morning, when

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she donned her best dress and discarded sabots in favor of quite smart boots. On Sunday afternoons her spirits seemed to droop. Probably she was thinking of her customary Sabbath promenade of happier days—a promenade made under an escort now taken from her for the duration of the war—mayhap forever.

So on Sunday afternoons Hélène, like the sensible girl she was, used to put on her old clothes again and get to work out in the fields.

Of Marguerite nothing need be said, except that she was approximately fourteen, was extremely plain, and that she takes no part whatever in this narrative.

Thirdly, the officer commanding B Company, with four subalterns. Their united ages amounted to about a hundred years.

Fourthly, B Company, two hundred strong.

Fifthly, Henri, of whom more anon.

And

(as they say on theatrical posters)

Sixthly, Petit Jean.

Altogether "some" household—to employ the phrase of the moment.

Truly, Madame's hands were full. Her husband was almost certainly dead. He and Liège had fallen together; and no news of him had since been obtainable. Her elder son, Jacques, was somewhere near Dixmude, serving with what was left of the Belgian artillery. Madame's sole male prop in the upkeep of the farm (always excepting Petit Jean) was a shambling, shifty-eyed hobbledehoy of twenty-five or so—one Henri, or "'Nrri," as Madame called him.

'Nrri was saved from military service by a mysterious disorder connected with "*ma poitrine, M'sieu' le Capitaine, my longs!*" (A hollow cough.) 'Nrri, one learned, was not

"YOU WILL SAY YOU ARE THE THIEF. IF YOU DO NOT, I WILL KILL YOU."

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a member of the family. He was a *réfugié*. He had arrived one day in the early autumn of 1914, hastening with other breathless persons before a tide of Prussian bayonets. Almost immediately afterward the tide turned, owing to the intervention of French and British bayonets, and Madame and Cow Corpse Farm were left safely above high-water mark, some three miles back from the trench line.

'Nrri remained on the farm, like a piece of particularly unattractive flotsam. For reasons connected with his *poitrine*, he could go no farther, and begged permission to remain and make himself useful. Labor is scarce in Belgium just now, and Madame was glad to keep him. He plowed and splashed about from dawn till dusk. He slept over the cow-houses with Petit Jean.

As for Petit Jean himself, he was a sturdy youth of uncertain age. In his workaday clothes, as he ordered the cows about or enjoyed himself in the unspeakable morass of manure which filled the yard, he looked a grimy fifteen. On Sundays—when, as a preliminary to attending mass, he was washed and attired in a tight blue knicker-bocker suit with brass buttons, black stockings, buttoned boots, and a species of yachting-cap—he looked an angelic twelve.

If Petit Jean's father and elder brother had not been claimed by the war, Madame and her daughters might have had a little more leisure for the general supervision of Petit Jean. But, owing to Madame's preoccupation with her unwieldy household, and Hélène's ceaseless, if silent, speculations as to the welfare of her absent escort, the molding of Petit Jean's young and plastic character was left a good deal more than was desirable to the unclean fingers of his stable (or cow-house) companion, 'Nrri—as you shall hear.

B Company, whose members have only been introduced to you, so far, *en bloc*, was commanded by a veteran of twenty-three—one Crombie. Promotion comes quickly upon the western front. A year previously Crombie had been leading a platoon round a barrack square at Aldershot. Since then he had seen as much active service as would have sufficed a soldier of the previous generation for a lifetime. This year's service had enabled him—in the elegant phraseology of the moment—"to put up two more pips"—in other words, to achieve the three stars of a captain. He was assisted in the task of ruling, feeding, housing, and leading some two hundred men, by his four youthful subalterns, and one seasoned warrior of enormous antiquity—Company Sergeant-Major Goffin.

B Company were "back at rest." They had handed over their trenches to D Company last Wednesday, and did not propose to return thither for seven days. For the moment they were at peace. It is true that a pair of six-inch guns (named respectively Ferdinand and Isabella), artfully concealed in a meadow a hundred yards distant, roared forth their message of destruction at uncertain periods both by day and night, shaking Cow Corpse Farm to its foundations.

Occasionally, too, an "Archibald," or anti-aircraft gun, would rumble up at dawn on its motor-lorry, with the crew hanging on like firemen to a fire-engine, and encamp for the day right in the muddy track which led from the road to the farm, deafening the inhabitants, and scaring the live stock thereof, as it assisted adventurous Boche aeroplanes to remove themselves from the immediate firmament.

Further, about three o'clock each afternoon the methodical Boche gunners would begin their daily exercise of "searching" for Ferdinand and Isabella. Sometimes their shells came sufficiently near to make it necessary for B Company to congregate for half an hour or so in a sandbag retiring-room specially constructed for the purpose in the rear of the barn. But these incidents, though disturbing, were the merest adjuncts of the daily round behind the trenches. B Company were at rest—and consequently at peace.

Yet not entirely at peace.

On this particular Saturday morning, Captain Crombie, having concluded his Orderly Room, and having dealt out admonition, reproof, and in one case Field Punishment Number One, with an even hand, continued to sit in the seat of judgment at the head of the kitchen table, frowning gloomily at a heap of parcels from home, which lay upon the stone floor in the corner by the grandfather's clock.

He turned to his second in command—one Rumbelow. "Any more gone this morning, Rum?" he asked.

"Two."

"Curse the fellow, whoever he is!" exclaimed Crombie.

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The parcels in question contained such comforts as go to mitigate the discomforts of the soldier on active service, and were addressed to members of the company to which "B" acted as relief. On Tuesday this company would come out of trenches and take over Cow Corpse Farm and all that appertained to it, including the heap of parcels which had been accumulating for them in their absence. But the heap would not be a complete heap.

"We shall have to do something," said Rumbelow.

"Did you speak to the sergeant-major about it?" asked Crombie.

"Yes. He wants to see you."

Crombie made a grimace. "I've no doubt!" he said. "However, have him in, and let's get it over."

Presently Sergeant-Major Goffin arrived, and saluted with the stately thoroughness of a generation which learned its drill in days when time was no object.

"Sergeant-major," began Crombie, "I want to consult you about this parcel business. It's very unpleasant altogether. Two more are missing this morning. Do you suspect anybody?"

"Sir," replied the sergeant-major portentously, "I have made the fullest investigation, and I have my suspicions."

"Well, let me hear them. Do you think it is one of the officers' servants?"

"I do not, sir. They are all boys of exemplary character. Neither do I suspect any man in B Company."

"If that's the case, I don't care twopence who it is. But—do you suspect some one?"

"In a manner of speaking, sir—yes."

"Well, let's get down to it. Who?"

The sergeant-major pointed an accusing finger—about the size and shape of a banana—toward the door which led from the kitchen to the inner room—an apartment which served as kitchen and dining-room for the whole of Madame's *ménage*, and as bedroom for all the ladies of the establishment.

"Not Madame?" exclaimed Crombie.

"No, sir. Not Madame, but a member of the family."

"Not Hélène, I'll swear!" announced Second Lieutenant Cradock, and then blushed hotly. He was barely nineteen and susceptible almost to anything.

"No, sir," conceded the sergeant-major, "not one of the young women."

"Well—who?" repeated Cradock impatiently.

"I *think*, sir," said the sergeant-major reluctantly—he loved the pomp and majesty of judicial procedure, and disliked short cuts—"that we ought to look for the accused in that loft above the cow-house."

"Who lives there?"

"The odd man, sir—Henry, I think his name is—and the young boy."

"Jean?"

"That is his name, I believe, sir."

"And you think——?"

"Yes, sir."

"Which?"

"The boy, John, sir." (The sergeant-major declined to recognize Gallic affectations like "Jean.")

"Why?"

The sergeant-major cleared his throat and swung into his peroration. "In my opinion, sir, these thefts are committed during the night. This room is fully occupied by day. There's the officers, and the officers' servants, and so forth. It would be difficult for anybody to come in here and pin—extract anything, sir, by day."

Here Rumbelow, who seldom spoke except to the point, intervened.

"What about the night?" he said. "I sleep here myself."

"That, sir," resumed the sergeant-major, a little reproachfully, "is what I was coming to. That is the reason why I suspect the boy. A full-grown man couldn't come groping about in here without making a noise. But a boy might creep in; and you, sir, if you will pardon the liberty, being perhaps a heavy sleeper, he might be able to help himself without disturbing you."

Sergeant-Major Goffin ran down, and stood at ease. Crombie pondered.

"If Jean comes in here," he said at last, "he must cross the yard to reach the door. Has the sentry seen anything?"

"No, sir. But the sentry is frequently out on the road."

Crombie pondered again. "There is only one thing to do," he said at last—"search the loft. I don't like the idea; neither will Madame; but——"

"I have a plan, sir," announced the sergeant-major modestly.

"What is it?"

"I was thinking, sir, that we might invite John and Henry into the N. C. O.s' quarters this evening, on some excuse."

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"'M, yes. But the excuse? However, I have no doubt you have one manufactured now, sergeant-major."

"Yes, sir," admitted the sergeant-major, with humble pride. "I've got a couple of old anti-gas helmets. I could issue the accused with the same, giving them instructions in the correct method of adjustment, and so on. That would occupy ten minutes, sir. During that time the loft might be searched. If nothing is found, then matters need go no further. Will you inspect the loft yourself, sir?"

"I am going out to dine with A Company this evening," said Crombie. "Mr. Rumbelow will take on the job. Is that settled, Rum?"

Mr. Rumbelow nodded assent.

"It's got to be done, I suppose," concluded the tender-hearted Crombie; "but I don't like it. This is a friendly country, and Madame is a good sort. Jean's a decent little beggar, too. Personally, I hope it turns out to be Henri; he's a shifty-looking tripe-hound. I should like to catch him bending. That will do, sergeant-major. You can report to me in the morning."

II

THAT night—as they say at the cinema—Crombie, on returning home to Cow Corpse Farm, found that overcrowded establishment still rocking from an upheaval of capital dimensions.

Imprimis. Jean and 'Nrri were both under close arrest.

Item. Most of the stolen property had been discovered under 'Nrri's bed. This fact seemed to designate 'Nrri as the criminal; but the sergeant-major, who, like other great specialists in crime, disliked seeing his theories falsified, had confined Petit Jean as well.

Finally, Madame, Hélène, Marguerite, and Sergeant-Major Goffin were all in the kitchen, waiting to exert undue influence upon the returning company commander. This, despite the fact that the phlegmatic Rumbelow had gone to bed, and was now sleeping soundly in their very midst.

The sensitive Crombie smiled feebly upon the tearful ladies, told the sergeant-major to bring up the prisoners in the morning, and withdrew, in bad order, to his Armstrong hut behind the hay-rick.

Meanwhile Petit Jean and 'Nrri sat in the straw in the screened-off corner of the barn which served as a guard-room, talking. Most of the guard were sleeping heavily; but under no circumstances would they have been able to understand the *patois* employed by the prisoners. The president of the French Academy would not have been able to understand it.

Petit Jean had wept copiously when arrested. 'Nrri had merely glowered, though, as a matter of fact, he was by far the more badly frightened of the two. Jean was now comparatively cheerful. He had partaken of bully beef and ration tea—much more luxurious fare than he would have received as a respectable member of society—and a friendly corporal had cried, "Hey, Johnny!" and tossed him a Woodbine. Petit Jean was now feeling something of a daredevil.

"Hear me!" said 'Nrri, in a low, snarling voice. "To-morrow, when the pig of a *sergent* brings us before the pig of a *capitaine*, you will say that you stole the packets—you, only!"

"But 'Nrri," argued Petit Jean, "you know that I only entered myself into the kitchen, and passed the packets out to you through the window."

"Nevertheless," repeated 'Nrri grimly, "you will say that you alone were the thief."

"Why?"

"Because they will not punish a little one like you. Me they might punish severely."

"But no," Petit Jean pointed out eagerly. "You are a *réfugié*, 'Nrri. You know he is kind, that English. You will tell him who you are; that the Boches have taken all you have——"

"To-morrow," announced 'Nrri, with unpleasant finality, "*you* will say that you alone are the thief. If you do not, I will kill you."

"How?" asked Petit Jean—not because he wished to know, but in order to give himself time to think the matter over. He had always been more than a little afraid of 'Nrri; and now there was a look in the man's crafty little eyes which gave him a cold, crawly feeling right up his spine.

"I shall wait," explained 'Nrri with relish, "until you are asleep one night in the loft. Then I will kill you with the bayonet of the Scotch whom we found dead in the ditch last winter. Your body I will slide into the cess-pit below the cow-house. There

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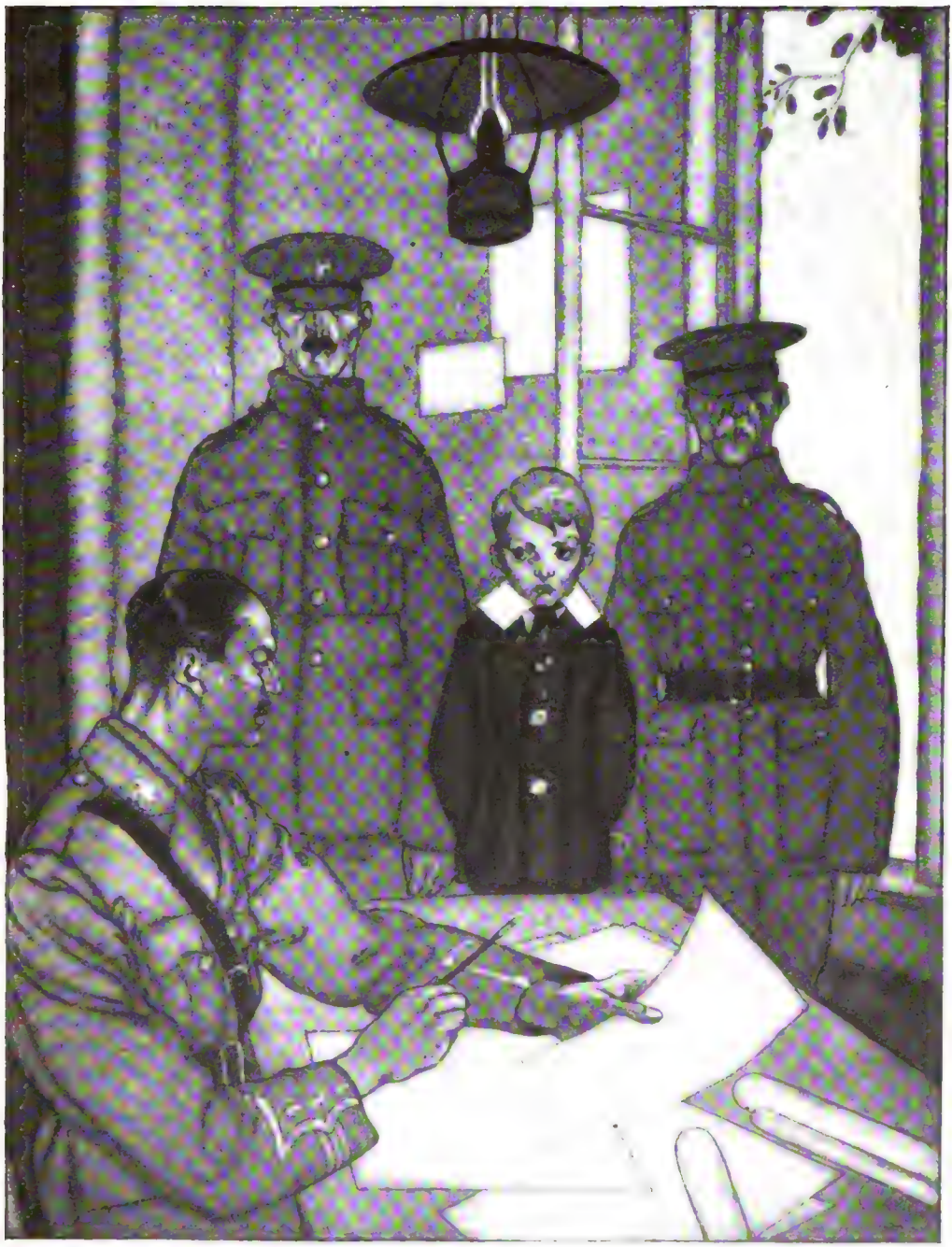

BEFORE HIM, IN A RIGID ROW, STOOD THE LARGE PRIVATE, PETIT JEAN, AND THE SERGEANT-MAJOR.

will be a *tohu bohu*, but they will not find you. And no one will suspect 'Nrri. Is it not so?"

Petit Jean, tingling now in the pit of his stomach as well as up his spine, agreed that it was so, and further promised to shoulder the entire responsibility in the morning.

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III

NEXT morning, Captain Crombie, returning with B Company from Church Parade at Battalion Headquarters about half-past nine, found that the Petit Jean *affaire* had entered another phase: 'Nrri was a free man, and Petit Jean was out on bail.

Rumbelow explained. "Just after you moved off with the company this morning, Petit Jean owned up to the sergeant-major that he was the desperate criminal, and that Henri was as pure as driven snow."

Crombie frowned. "I'm sorry to hear that," he said. "Are you sure Petit Jean didn't say that Henri was the criminal? I would back the sergeant-major to get hold of the sticky end of the wand when conversing in the language of this country, every time."

"No; apparently all was in order. Goffin was corroborated by the cook, who was called in as assistant interpreter. So Henri left the court without a stain on his character."

"What have you done with Petit Jean?"

Rumbelow grinned. "I thought you would prefer to deal with the case yourself," he said, "so I remanded him."

"Curse you!" replied the company commander cordially. "What am I to do with the little beast?"

"There is a *gendarmerie* in that village near Brigade Headquarters," said Cradock, who was reading by the window.

Crombie shook his head. "If we hand him over to the local cop," he said, "it will mean a civil action, and all sorts of complications."

"Let the sergeant-major bend him over and give him six of the best," suggested the practical Rumbelow.

The harassed Crombie shook his head again. "It would mean a devil of a lot of unpleasantness with Madame," he observed ruefully—"not to mention the young ladies."

"Then why not give the youth a good telling off, and dismiss the case?"

"And a pretty fair Juggins I should look," retorted Crombie, with justifiable heat, "sitting here and *straffing* Petit Jean in a language which I can't speak, and which he can't understand!" He puffed savagely at his pipe. "However, the longer we look at it, the less we shall like it. Where is the little swine? Still in the guard-room?"

"No. Madame has bailed him out for an hour or two. I am not a French scholar myself; but I gathered from her that there would be the father and mother of a row with the *curé* if I didn't let Petit Jean off for Sunday mass."

"The *curé?*" Over the troubled features of Captain Crombie stole a flicker of relief—almost of joy. "The *curé* here is a friend of mine," he continued. "I gave him a lift in the mess-cart only the day before yesterday. Ha—*ha!* Tell the sergeant-major I want him, Cradock, like a good chap."

When Cradock returned with the sergeant-major five minutes later, Crombie was sitting in the judgment seat behind the kitchen table, furtively scribbling certain sentences upon a sheet of office paper. Rumbelow, in the chimney-corner, was regarding his superior officer with an air of whimsical solemnity. Mr. Rumbelow possessed a keen sense of humor, but unlike most humorists preferred to consume his own smoke.

"Sergeant-major," commanded Crombie in his Orderly-Room voice, "bring in the prisoner."

The great man saluted. "Shall I fetch an escort, sir?" he inquired.

Crombie, immersed in the labors of composition, nodded absently. Straightway the sergeant major withdrew to the yard outside, where his voice was heard uplifted in command.

"Escort—*tchu-urn!* Left—*turn.* Quick—march!"

Clump! clump! clump! The sergeant-major entered the kitchen, followed by an enormous private. The pair tramped across the stone-floored kitchen in solemn majesty to the door of the inner room, where the escort, in response to an ear-splitting order, halted.

The sergeant-major, advancing one pace, knocked three times upon the door, and exclaimed in a terrible voice:

"*G-arsong!*"

There was a flutter within; the door was opened by a person unseen, and the procession disappeared. Mr. Rumbelow turned his face to the brickwork of the chimney-corner, and held it there. Cradock hastily buried his features in an obsolete copy of the *Tatler*. Crombie, oblivious to his surroundings, still scribbled nervously.

"Prisoner and escort—*tchu-urn!* Into file, left turn! Quick—*march!*"

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Clump! clump! clump!

Presently Captain Crombie, conscious of the near presence of several warm human beings, looked up. Before him, in a rigid row, stood the large private, Petit Jean, and the sergeant-major. Petit Jean was wearing his Sunday suit, already described, with the exception of his yachting cap, which, in accordance with King's regulations, had been plucked from his head.

"The boy John, sir!" announced the sergeant-major in a voice of thunder, and handed Crombie a yellow army form, containing Petit Jean's "crime."

Crombie took the paper, and from sheer force of habit, began to read:

"*John. Charged with stealing the following articles upon various dates—namely——*"

Then, realizing for the first time the imbecility of the present procedure, he thrust the document away from him, and glanced stealthily at the first sentence on his scribbled sheet. After this he cleared his throat in a distressing manner, looked Petit Jean straight in the face, and said to himself: "You are a thief." Then aloud:

"Er—h'm—*vous êtes voleur?*"

Petit Jean promptly burst into tears. This gave Crombie an opportunity of studying the next sentence.

"Shall I give you up to the police?" he murmured. And then:

"*Voulez-vous*," he continued, when Petit Jean had regained a measure of composure, "*que je vous donnerai* (I'm sure that ought to be in the subjunctive) *aux gendarmes?*"

Petit Jean responded with a further outburst, supplemented by a violent attack of hiccups.

Cradock rose unsteadily to his feet and groped his way out of the kitchen. The conscientious Crombie proceeded to his next conundrum:

"Shall I give you to the sergeant to be flogged? *Voulez-vous que je vous—er—donne au sergent pour être battu—n'est ce pas?*" The last phrase was thrown in on the spur of the moment, and Crombie felt rather proud of it.

The prisoner, however, made no attempt to reply to these engaging propositions. Instead, he sobbed out a long and incomprehensible rigmarole, the only intelligent item of which was the word "*pardon.*" Crombie, again utilizing his opportunity, made a further study of his brief. Then he launched his master-thrust:

"*Est-ce que vous avez fait*—no, *fit*—no, never mind—I mean, *ça ne fait rien.*" He took a good breath, and started again:

"*Est-ce que vous avez fait confession à Monsieur le Curé*—eh?"

There was a dramatic silence, broken by a rending hiccup from the accused. Crombie continued hastily:

"You will jolly well go and confess to the *curé* about it—I mean, *Demain, vous irez chez Monsieur le Curé, et vous ferez confession, toute de suite—complet—absolument*"—he was "gagging" wildly now—"*entièrement, et sans doute—que vous êtes voleur. Comprenez?* Anyhow, I'll tell the *curé* myself, my son, so you'll get it put across you either way! Now then, clear out! *Allez-vous en!* Sergeant-major, for Heaven's sake take this hiccupping little blighter away!"

Whether Petit Jean was duly appreciative of the linguistic effort made on his behalf by Captain Crombie will never be known. But the fact remains that on the following afternoon Madame appeared at the kitchen doorway, and summoned Petit Jean, who was engaged upon some professional duty in the pigsty, to the family living-room. He emerged half an hour later, uncannily clean, and dressed in his Sunday suit, supplemented by a large umbrella, and set off with dragging feet across the fields which led to the *curé's* house. What happened there I can not tell, but it is probable that Petit Jean duly "had it put across him," as predetermined by that wise and merciful young judge, Captain Crombie.

IV

FOR the next ten days life pressed very heavily upon Petit Jean. He was in disgrace: the *officiers* no longer gave him a smile on passing, or made observation to him in a language which they imagined to be French and which Petit Jean judged to be English.

It was an uncomfortable time for more important persons than Petit Jean. The two six-inch guns, Ferdinand and Isabella, were receiving attentions from the Boche artillery which grew daily more tiresome and accurate. It was obvious that they had been "spotted." One day a big howitzer shell swung lazily out of the blue and landed ten yards from the abiding-place of Isabella.

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THE *CURÉ*, A LITTLE RUFFLED, WAS ON THE POINT OF DEPARTURE.

within a few hours the two big guns had been towed to a fresh anchorage some distance to a flank. The next morning was devoted to "registering," with the aid of an aeroplane, upon a convenient château behind the Boche lines; this formality completed, regular business was resumed.

Exactly twenty-four hours later, a salvo of hostile "crumps" descended upon the new emplacements. The guns escaped damage, but the bursts of shrapnel which followed the crumps accounted for the battery sergeant-major and two gunners. Once more transport was hurriedly summoned, and the royal pair removed to another portion of the realm.

The artillery captain, Maple, who lived in a wooden hut half a mile from the farm, rode over that evening to confide his woes to B Company, who had just returned from another turn in the trenches.

"That Boche battery didn't open fire on my new positions by accident," he observed darkly.

"Well, it wasn't any of us who gave him the tip," said Rumbelow. "We have been in trenches all week."

The captain, disregarding this pleasantry, put down his bowl of tea, and continued: "We haven't been in those positions a couple of days, and there hasn't been a Boche aeroplane over since Monday. And yet they have us stiff. There's only one explanation."

Crombie nodded. "Spies, of course," he said.

"Of course," grunted the gunner savagely. "But it's hopeless to run them to earth in this country. There are lots of inhabited farms 'quite close up to the line; yet we aren't 'allowed to fire anybody out. If I had my way, I'd deport the whole bunch five miles back. The place must be

Fortunately it was a "dud," but the battery commander, realizing the undesirability of tempting Providence too far, telephoned for his traction-engine; and

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full of refugees whom the *Maire* can't account for. However, I suppose we must put up with it. That's the worst of fighting in a friendly country: you have to consider everybody's feelings so infernally. I bet the Boche has everybody on his side of the line trotting around with a number-plate on, like a taxi! Well, I must wander off."

"Stop and help us to struggle with our curried bully beef," urged the Mess.

"Sorry," explained the gunner; "but the present situation is too tricky."

Crombie accompanied his visitor to the farm-gate, where an orderly was dispatched for the battery commander's horse.

"If I see any suspicious-looking stranger lounging about," said Crombie, "I'll run him in."

"Thanks, old man!" replied the harried gunner, and trotted away into the dusty sunset. Crombie turned to go back to the kitchen, and found himself face to face with Petit Jean. Petit Jean, with hanging head, promptly sidled toward a pigsty. His demeanor was so dejected that Crombie, suddenly reminded of last week's episode, and mindful of the acute sorrows of his own sinful youth, laid a hand upon Petit Jean's shoulder, and exclaimed affably:

"Hello, Petit Jean! *Comment vous portez-vous*—What?"

Petit Jean, not sure what these incomprehensible words might mean, wriggled nervously.

"*Il fait beau temps*," continued Crombie, warming to his work. "*Il sera joli chaud demain, n'est-ce pas?*" He concluded with a smile so jolly that Petit Jean realized with a joyous thrill that this *was* a friendly conversation, and that his period of ostracism was accomplished. He grinned gratefully, from ear to ear.

"*Et maintenant*," concluded Crombie, soaring to fresh heights, "come and have some cake. *Venez avec moi dans la cuisine, et avez*—*avez*—what I mean is, *je vous donnerai une pièce de gâteau. Mouvons!*"

V

PETIT JEAN lay awake under the red tiles of his loft, listening to the endless plop-plop of the Very lights, punctuated by occasional bursts of machine-gun fire, along the distant line. Sleep had forsaken him to-night; but the cause was elation rather than depression of spirits. His youthful palate was still cloyed with Huntley & Palmer cake, and his heart was correspondingly uplifted.

It was a dark and cloudy night, and Petit Jean was thereby deprived of one of his favorite sedative exercises—namely, counting the stars in those patches of sky which were visible through holes in the roof.

Suddenly his sharp senses told him that in some way the peace of the loft had been disturbed. On consideration, he realized what had happened. The regular breathing of 'Nrri, who slept at the other end of the loft, had ceased, and had given place to a series of stertorous puffs, accompanied by a creaking sound. 'Nrri was awake and pulling on his boots. 'Nrri was going out.

All good civilians in the war-zone are supposed to be safely tucked up and in bed by nine o'clock. Yet here was 'Nrri about to snap his fingers at martial law at two o'clock in the morning. But at first Petit Jean experienced no surprise. To be quite frank, 'Nrri was an inveterate night-bird. He was in the habit of committing the military crime of "breaking out of billets" at least once a week. Whenever the accumulation of parcels from the kitchen made it worth while, 'Nrri was accustomed to pay a nocturnal visit to the establishment of a venerable female who supported life, externally, by the sale of small beer, cigarets, and picture post-cards. The lady was known among the light-hearted soldiery of the district—possibly in reference to a figure which bore unmistakable testimony to some sixty years of generous diet and insufficient exercise—as Madame Zeppelin.

To Madame, 'Nrri bartered the cigarets, cigars, condensed milk, chocolate, and other comforts stolen from the parcels, and Madame disposed of the same, at cent. per cent. profit, to the light-hearted soldiery aforesaid.

Presently 'Nrri's sketchy toilet was completed, and he began to move stealthily down the ladder. Petit Jean, silent but wide awake, was overtaken by a fresh thought: Why should 'Nrri be going to Madame Zeppelin's now? He had no wares to offer; recent legal proceedings had knocked that traffic on the head. A further thought: Was 'Nrri bound for Madame Zeppelin's at all? If not—whither?

After that, Petit Jean began to think very hard indeed. He had always been secretly afraid of 'Nrri, and since their

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conversation in the guard-room he had hated him as well. On the other hand, he loved *Monsieur le Capitaine* and his officers like brothers—especially since this afternoon. Petit Jean felt instinctively that these stealthy movements in the dark were directed in some wise against the safety and well-being of the present house-party at Cow Corpse Farm in particular, and of the British army in general.

Five minutes later 'Nrri had effected an unostentatious departure from the back premises of the farm—thus avoiding the sentry out on the road in front—and was picking his way cautiously across country toward the trenches. The night was black as ink—so black that no object in the landscape cast a shadow. Yet a shadow followed 'Nrri—a small human shadow—inexorably all the way to his destination; which, by the way, was not the establishment of Madame Zeppelin.

VI

PETIT JEAN stepped out of the cow-house next morning, took a deep breath, planted himself full in the path of Captain Crombie, and exclaimed feverishly:

"*M'sieu' le Capitaine!*"

"*Bon jour*, Petit Jean!" replied Crombie, who was in a hurry, and attempted to pass.

But Petit Jean repeated: "*M'sieu' le Capitaine!*"

Crombie paused. "Well, what about it, old son?" he inquired.

In answer, Petit Jean embarked upon a hurried recitation, casting anxious glances all the while in the direction of the beetroot-stack, where 'Nrri was selecting the cows' luncheon.

Finally the recitation ceased, and Petit Jean eyed the captain eagerly. But all the reply he got was:

"*C'est dommage*, my lad, but *no compree!*"

Then upon Petit Jean descended the inspiration of a lifetime. "*M. le Curé?*" he suggested eagerly. The *curé* could speak English of a sort.

"The *curé?*" said Crombie. "I thought that incident was closed!"

But Petit Jean was urgent. "*Le curé, m'sieu', ce soir, à six heures!* Seex o'clock!"

"Oh," replied Crombie, beginning to see light. "Er—*ici?*"

Petit Jean nodded his head vigorously.

"Righto! Carry on with your mysterious project, and I'll be here. But I wonder what the old man wants to see me for."

As a matter of fact, the *curé* was quite unaware of the approaching symposium. For one thing, it was Friday, and his busy day. Consequently when Petit Jean's bullet head peeped shyly round his kitchen door, and Petit Jean's voice proffered the modest request that he would present himself at B Company's billet—over a mile away—that evening at six o'clock, the old gentleman's reply was a little testy. But when he had heard the tale which his small parishioner had to unfold, his eyes gleamed through his spectacles, and he said, quite simply:

"I come, my little! But meanwhile, silence yourself!"

As a matter of fact, the last arrival at the meeting was Captain Crombie. That afternoon Ferdinand and Isabella had been shelled out of a third position, and Crombie had ridden off to offer condolences. Finding Maple almost at his wits' ends, he bethought him suddenly of the *curé*.

"Look here," he said, "I have a kind of notion that it might pay you to come over to my quarters. The *curé* will be there at"—he looked at his watch—"well, he's there now. He's a patriotic old cove. He may be able to suggest a possible renegade among his flock. Come and pump him dry."

Ten minutes later the pair trotted in at the farm gate, to encounter the *curé*, a little ruffled, on the point of departure. But he was shepherded with fair words into the only armchair. The kitchen doors were shut—fortunately the rest of the household were out in the fields—and Petit Jean told his tale.

Briefly, it amounted to this:

He had tracked 'Nrri to an empty house, some three hundred yards behind the reserve line. The house, which had been badly knocked about by shell-fire, was called Five-point-nine Villa. 'Nrri had disappeared within. Jean, with some acumen, had crept round to the east end of the building—the end facing the German lines—in order to detect suspicious flashes or other signals.

"What did you see?" asked Crombie eagerly.

The *curé* passed the question on. Petit Jean, with a doleful grimace, shook his head.

"Nothing—eh?" said Maple.

"That doesn't signify anything," said

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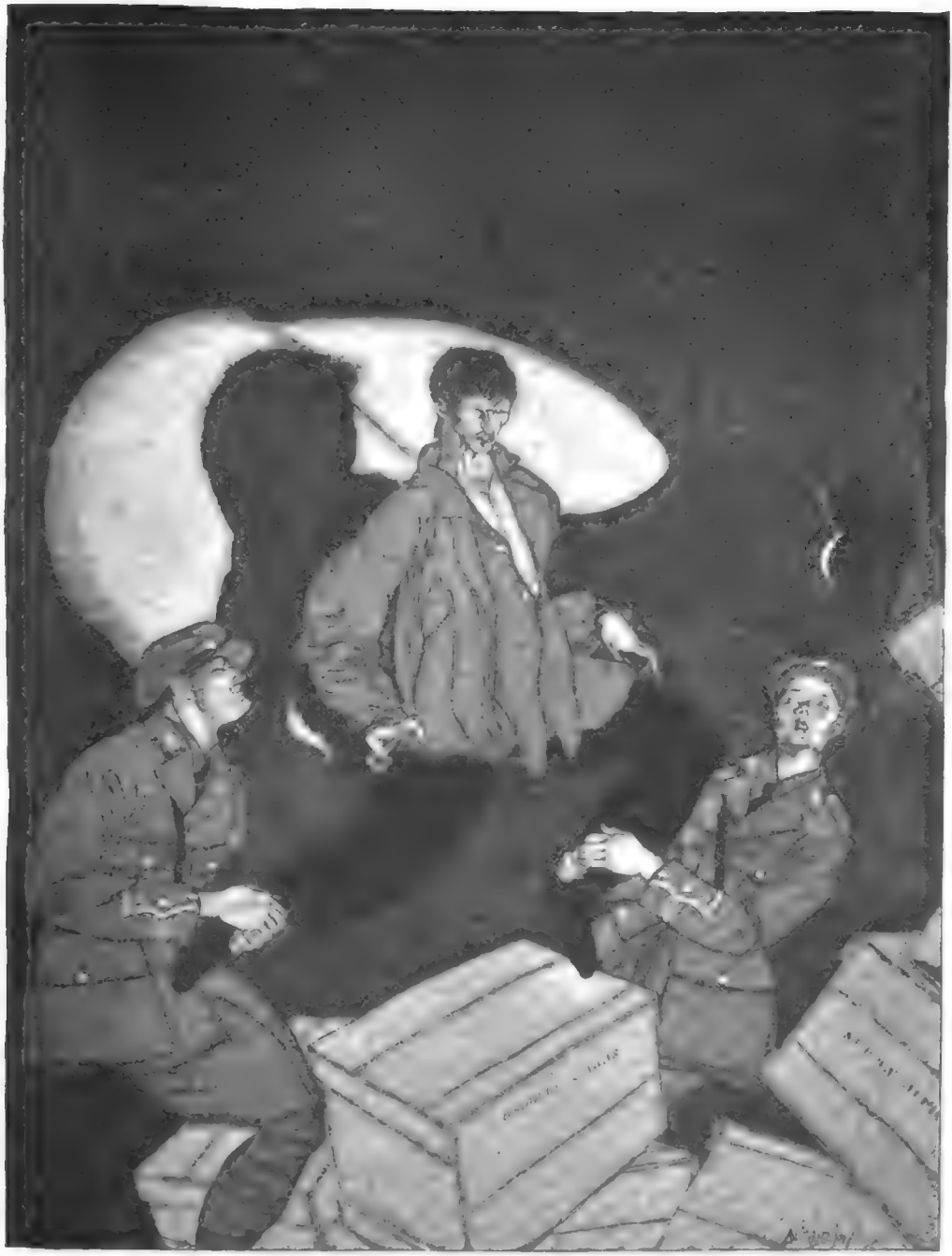

'NRRI PRECIPITATELY ABANDONED THE OCCUPATION OF TELEGRAPH OPERATOR IN FAVOR OF THAT OF AN ACROBATIC CONTORTIONIST.

Crombie. "'Nrri probably stood well back from the window, and Petit Jean, being on the ground, couldn't spot the flashes. Anything else, Petit Jean?"

Yes, there was something else. Petit Jean produced his trump card. Failing to extract any satisfaction from the house, he had turned his attention to the German lines.

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"And what is it, my son," inquired the old *curé* eagerly, "that you have seen there?"

"My father," replied Petit Jean with breathless solemnity, "I have seen a red light which made itself to appear three times!"

"And this light? It proceeded from——"

"From behind the trenches of the Boche."

"*Ca suffit!*" said the old man briskly, and turned to the two officers.

NEXT afternoon the trap was laid. Fresh gun-pits were dug, and Ferdinand and Isabella were ostentatiously installed therein. By ten o'clock the same evening Crombie and Maple were inmates of Five-point-nine Villa.

The villa possessed two stories, with the inevitable *grenier*, or loft, running from end to end under the tiles, to which our friends mounted. At the eastern end of this loft, in the apex of the gable, glimmered a circular unglazed window. Through this drifted the never-ceasing, uneasy sounds of trench warfare. The wood at this point thinned to a mere belt, through which it was possible to see right across to the trench-lines.

Crombie cautiously turned on his electric torch. The only visible furniture of the loft was a pile of lumber in one corner, and a curious edifice, composed of British army ration boxes, standing up like a pulpit in the middle of the floor. The torch went out.

"What is that erection for?" asked Crombie.

"I think I know," said Maple. He felt his way in the dark, and presently could be heard climbing. "I thought so," remarked his voice, proceeding apparently from just under the low roof. "Come up here. You'll find a sort of staircase of boxes at the back."

In a few moments the two officers were standing side by side on the top step of the staircase, looking over the summit of the pulpit at the circular window in the gable end. Through this could be seen the tossing branches of trees silhouetted against the flares of the trench-line.

"You see?" said Maple. "This is the signaling-stand. It is exactly level with that little round window. Impossible to spot a flash sent from here unless you were right in the line of the window and the lamp. I should say that the line of sight from this platform to the lower edge of the window just clears our front-line trenches. Pretty neat! Cunning fellow!"

"I wonder where he keeps his lamp," mused Crombie.

"*Messieurs!*"

"I expect he brings it with him. Too risky to—Hallo! What's that?"

"*Messieu-u-urs!*" A sibilant, panting whisper shot up the rickety staircase. It emanated from Petit Jean, who had run all the way from Cow Corpse Farm, making a detour into the bargain. Crombie descended from the pulpit, and went to the stair-head.

"*Il s'approche!*" hissed Petit Jean, and vanished.

'NRRI'S first proceeding upon arrival was to mount the pulpit, apparently with a view to inspecting as much of the landscape as was visible through the circular window. Next, breathing heavily in the darkness, he betook himself to the eastern end of the room. This was fortunate for Crombie and Maple, who were among the lumber at the other end. A creaking sound was heard.

"He's prizing up a plank!" whispered Maple.

Crombie nodded his head in the darkness. Evidently 'Nrri was digging out his lamp.

Presently the shuffling footsteps returned, and, to an accompaniment of groaning ration-boxes, 'Nrri reascended his rostrum. Followed a click, and a dazzling

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spot of light struck the wall opposite, just under the window. Another click, and the light went out.

"Elevation too low, old son!" muttered Maple.

Next time the signaler made no mistake. The spot of light could not be seen now, for it was impinging upon a Boche retina many hundreds of yards away.

Click—click—clickety—click! 'Nrri was calling up some invisible "exchange." He paused, waited, and began again. Then again. So immersed was he in the interesting occupation of getting into touch with his friends beyond the lines, that he quite failed to note the somewhat surprising fact that his feet, which stood upon the topmost step of the pulpit, about a yard from the floor, had suddenly become luminous—or at least that they were being illuminated at close range by an electric torch.

Three seconds later the torch, having served its purpose in locating the exact position of the feet, was switched off; four willing and muscular hands grabbed the ankles of the preoccupied 'Nrri; Captain Crombie and Maple, each planting a foot squarely against his side of the pulpit, gave a gigantic heave; 'Nrri precipitately abandoned the occupation of telegraph operator in favor of that of an acrobatic contortionist; there was a dull thud, followed by a rattle of cascading ration-boxes. Then silence.

Crombie's torch shone out again. 'Nirr, having just performed "the splits" in mid-air and subsequently fallen upon the back of his head, lay quite still.

"Golly, he took a toss and a half!" observed Crombie. "Have we done him in, do you think?"

"No," said Maple. "He's breathing all right. Put the handcuffs on him, and I'll whistle up your sergeant-major and escort."

TEN minutes later 'Nrri, in full possession of his faculties and perspiring icily, was on his way back to Cow Corpse Farm, escorted by two large British privates, preceded by Petit Jean, and supervised from the rear by Sergeant-Major Goffin.

Crombie and Maple remained in the loft.

"That chap was a Boche all right," said Maple. "He gave himself away when he came to."

"Was that German he spoke? I haven't the pleasure of knowing it."

"It was; and fairly profane German, too."

"No idea you were such a linguist."

"I had a German governess in my youth," explained Maple, modestly. "Up to this moment, I have always wished that she had been French. This lamp is a good instrument." He clicked the shutter. "Not damaged, either."

"It will be useful as evidence," said Crombie.

Maple chuckled. "I have another use for it first!" he said, and began to rebuild the platform.

Presently the two captains stood level again with the round window. Maple began to manipulate the shutter of the lamp.

"I'm giving the Morse call-up signal," he explained. "I have a notion to jape with the Boche. Let us see if we can draw him. My word, look!"

Far away in the darkness, beyond the fretful, spluttering trench-lines, there suddenly glowed out a red point of light—then again—then again.

"Three red dashes!" said Maple. "I presume that is the answering signal. Now, let me think. What is the German for——"

He relapsed into silence, and clicked his shutter vigorously. Then he switched off, and abruptly descended to the floor.

"I have a feeling," he said, "that we may have a few shells over here shortly. Let us hence!"

"What did you say to the blighters?" inquired Crombie, as the pair stepped out briskly along the muddy track which ran back to the Cow Corpse Farm.

"I said: '*Line's busy! Gott strafe England!*'"

Isaac F. Marcosson, American reporter, has gained a leading place as a writer on international subjects since the beginning of the war. Mr. Marcosson has been sent to Europe by EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE. He has accepted assignments which will put to the severest test his remarkable news-getting ability. Mr. Marcosson is writing exclusively for EVERYBODY'S.

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NEW MEN FOR OLD

The Hiring and Firing Problem in Industry

AS THESE pages go to press, America faces war. If war comes, it means a heavy withdrawal of the physically fit from our factories. Fourteen nations are now proving that military preparedness rests on industrial efficiency. The United States must also learn the lesson that any wastage which lowers the physical and productive standards of a country should be at once checked. The first reform that should be undertaken by patriotic employers is the elimination of the shifting of labor known as the Turnover. Always a source of industrial loss and weakness in times of peace, the evils involved in this handicap to working efficiency are now a national menace.

Lillian Erskine has spent five years as an expert investigator of occupational hazard and loss of working efficiency. For the New Jersey Department of Labor, and in other states, she has covered a comprehensive field, including the metal and chemical industries and the standardization of munition plants. In every instance this investigating has meant first-hand experience with the actual working conditions offered to employees, and has involved risk from poisonous fumes, deadly acids, unprotected machinery, excessive heat, and practically every known physical hardship. As a result of her experience, she has cooperated with employers in standardizing working conditions essential for holding

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By Lillian Erskine in collaboration with Treadwell Cleveland, Jr.

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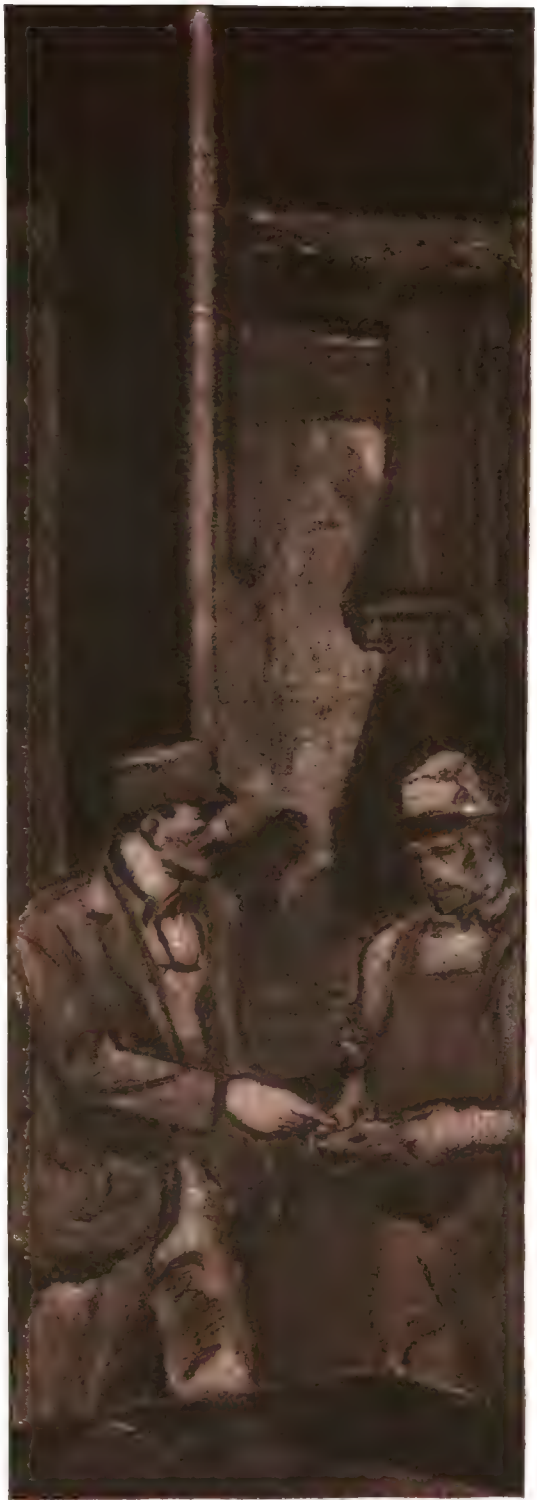

a steady force in almost every type of manufacturing plant, and her findings and recommendations are now applied in some of the most important factories in the country.

EVERYBODY'S readers are already familiar with Miss Erskine's work. Under the name of Gordon Thayer she published in EVERYBODY'S in 1912 the influential article on Phosphorus Legislation, and in 1913 "The Lead Menace," which gave sanitary industrial standards to half a dozen states. "Safety First" made a plea in 1914 for a National Museum of Safety. Miss Erskine has consented to drop her pen-name. Collaborating with her in this and other articles to come is a well-known contributor to the field of social economics, Treadwell Cleveland, Jr.—THE EDITOR.

IF YOU would know at first hand the big weak spot in our American manufacturing system, throw away the current newspaper editorials on the Menace of the Unrestrained Labor Strike, and set your alarm-clock at 5.30 A.M.

It is worth an early start; for you are on the track of an economic wastage so colossal as to match its hundred dollars of annual loss to every ten dimes of financial injury wrung as the toll of the industrial deadlock.

In the chill of the gray dawn, dressed in the oldest clothing you can muster, turn your face from your familiar haunts

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in the office section of the city, and make your way toward the ranks of tall chimneys guarding the outskirts of the town.

Slip quickly by the silent bulk of a dead factory, union-picketed without and police-sentried within, which is featured in the morning's headlines; for your errand is not to the plant bleeding from industrial surgery by means of the strikers' axe, but to one whose line-shafting is seldom idle, and whose doors have been untroubled for twenty years by the shadow of a Walking Delegate.

You are in search of what is ordinarily reckoned the most commonplace and normal of all the daily sights in any manufacturing community—a nondescript group of job-hunters, tailing down the block from a factory employment office's closed door. Nevertheless, as you take your place in line, and stand elbow to elbow with them in the keen air of the March sunrise, you have become a unit in a national menace to the employer, to labor, and to society at large.

The Old-Type Employment Agent

At the sounding of the whistle, and the vibrant coming to life of dead shafting and wheels inside, push your way with the others through the now opened door, and await your turn in the process of sifting the chaff of the old, the physically broken, and the alcoholic, from the residue of wheat that has been winnowed by the threshing-machine of industry. With the enforced patience of the job-hunter, try to realize (as they seem instinctively to do) the futility of appeal from the absolute authority of the little man of the hour who sits behind the rail.

Appreciate, as the other job-hunters can not, however, the heavy odds against him in his efforts successfully to fill those yellow slips upon his desk: requisitions sent to him but a few hours before by foremen whom he knows only by sight; from expanded departments he rarely visits; covering work with which he is technically unfamiliar, and subject to an output-standard of which he has barely heard. Fill out, at last, like the rest of the candidates, the personal questions on an application blank (such as could be duplicated in forty other factories handling an absolutely different class of labor and production), and eventually find yourself "hired," rather than "employed"—with a ninety per cent. chance against your having been assigned to the position or department for which you are physically or mentally fitted.

The Old-Type Foreman

Theoretically you represent an outlay of fifty cents to the firm, whose trade-mark has been stamped for a generation on the pay-roll upon which your name is entered. As a matter of fact (if you consent to see the experiment through), costliness will dog your footsteps from the moment you are sent up to your foreman, whom long experience with the hit-or-miss method of the employment office has prepared for the worst.

You are handicapped by lack of technical training, and by your need for supervision as to the handling of the machine on which you have been placed. But you soon discover that your foreman's only remedy against such incompetence is to follow the traditions in which he has been trained, and to threaten to "fire" you as arbitrarily as he fired the long line of your predecessors.

Antagonism is the key-note of your relations with the "man higher up." And this is fostered by the tacit bond of discontent which springs up between you and your fellow-workers. The noon whistle gives you your choice between shop gossip over a cold dinner-pail in the workroom and hurrying—unwashed and as you come off your machine—to the more open criticism passed about in the haven of a near-by saloon.

But popular or the reverse, you take no orders save from your foreman; and you find you can look to none other than him for instructions in the rare intervals in which he is not setting piece-rates; planning the work assigned to his machines; setting speeds and feeds; deciding on tools and depths of cuts; supervising repairs to equipment; checking stock; adjusting wages; eliminating congestion; and overseeing the thousand and one details of his department.

One morning, when he has been "jumped" by the man higher up, and needs a safety-valve for his temper and over-tried nerves, you find yourself handing in your dismissal slip at the pay-window. While the firm's balance-sheet unknowingly carries the various costly items of your haphazard instruction,

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your unproductive labor, your retardation of the department's output, your breakage of tools, and your spoiling of material.

Familiar Game of Battledore and Shuttlecock

No one who has experienced at first-hand the "vicious circle" of our still persistent hiring and firing system; no one who has played even a voluntary part in the game of battledore and shuttlecock between the old-type foreman and the untrained employment agent, can be convinced that his experience is exceptional.

As a matter of fact (making allowance for a low percentage of insubordination, incompetence, and "just quitting"), you will find that you can duplicate your case by the thousand in any manufacturing center of the country. Whether you throw in your lot with the unskilled "Hunkie" in the foundry, or with the trained mechanic in the tool-shop, you will learn that, excepting under the best standards of management, your livelihood and your hopes of advancement may lie absolutely at the mercy of a straw-boss, who neither hires you nor pays you a copper of your wage.

THROWN OUT, WITHOUT CAUSE OR WARNING, ON THE SAY-SO OF TOM THIS OR MIKE THAT.

Yet it has been because of the very universality of the unregulated Labor Turnover thus engendered—of the percentage of

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"THIRTY-TWO MEN ON THAT MACHINE IN TEN MONTHS. HOW DO YOU EXPECT AN OUTPUT?"

workers who pass into and out of our factories and mills, and the continual and unnecessary substitution of new men for old, of the untrained for the experienced —that the magnitude of the economic losses involved has so long escaped widespread detection. The ebb and flow is silent.

The very fact that the process lacks the spectacular features of the widely advertised strike, renders it the more dangerous. Nevertheless, *it can be proved that the wastage of the Labor Turnover is a hundredfold more costly than that of the strike.* Unlike the strike, however, it automatically yields no hope of industrial or social gain, in better standards of wage or of living, or of broadened purchasing power. Only by its elimination can its constructive possibilities be realized. It may be likened to the daily strewing of countless grains of sand into the complicated machinery of the national output. And the resulting loss to capital and to society at large has been as final and complete as it was needless.

Who Pays the Cost?

If you imagine that your experiment in a factory workroom concerns you more than the firm that took you on, remember the machine you tried to run, failed "to get the hang of," and finally left out of commission when your foreman discharged you.

"I suppose that's typical of where our big leak has been," the General Manager confesses a few days later to the efficiency expert before whom he lays the output-record of your particular machine. "You see, there's a case where we threw away $2,500 on the original price of equipment; and a forty per cent. product is all we've got—besides that bill for repairs—to show for our money."

The visitor runs over the sheaf of yellow slips and emits a low whistle. "But you've had thirty-two men on that machine in ten months," he says. "How do you expect to get an output?"

"What's that got to do with it?"

"I suppose you realize that in addition to that $2,500, you wasted nearly $2,000 of good money on breaking those men in. From my point of view, it's cheaper to throw machinery out of the window than to run a Turnover like that."

"I don't get you."

The visitor rises, and, going to the window, points across the factory yard to a group of men entering a door over which is posted a sign of "Help Wanted." "Supposing, Mr. Lawson, we drop the question of machinery for a while," he suggests, "and discuss instead what your employment office is costing you."

The General Manager looks relieved. "I know that labor's the biggest nuisance we're up against," he answers. "But so far as the actual cost of hiring goes, you needn't worry, Hartley. I understand we've cut that down to fifty cents a head."

"Taking on many?"

"Oh, I hardly know. Of course I don't bother with those minor details. We run

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a steady force here, but there's bound to be some shifting, of course, out of a pay-roll of six hundred. Maybe we take on a dozen, more or less, a day. Say, Clancy, how many foremen's requisitions are there on file to-day? Twenty-one? Didn't know it ever ran so heavy as that."

"And you say each new man costs you only half a dollar?"

"That's right, isn't it, Clancy? Yes; fifty cents apiece covers our employment costs."

"Suppose, just for the sake of argument," Mr. Hartley resumes as they again seat themselves, "that I tell you you're wrong, and that fifty cents apiece doesn't begin to cover those costs? Suppose I told you that, instead of fifty cents a head, each one of those unskilled men you took on to-day will cost you from $80 to $100 before he's thoroughly broken in and worth his full day's wage? And that every skilled man signed up this morning will stand you from $250 to $300? And that some of your most highly specialized workers can't be replaced under $1,000 apiece?"

"That's easy. I'd say you were off your head."

"But suppose I've got the facts?"

"You'll have to show me."

"What if I prove to you that you haven't, as you think, a 'steady force'? That I've already informed myself that your foremen are shooting requisitions at your employment office at an average rate of twelve per day? That in twelve months—to keep up the 'steady force' you talk about—you've hauled 3,600 men through your gates? That you're running a monthly Labor Turnover of fifty per cent., and a yearly one of six hundred per cent.? That during the last year and a half covered by the records I found on file, you've practically thrown $350,000 of legitimate profits out of your employment window?"

"The thing's utterly preposterous. Why, you say yourself that we average only a dozen men a day!"

"But you'll find, Mr. Lawson, that if you averaged only twelve a week, you'd nevertheless turn over your entire force once a year. Don't you realize that if—out of every hundred in your employ—only five a month either move away, or become ill, or disabled, or 'just quit' for any trivial cause, a Turnover of sixty per cent.—or a majority of your pay-roll—will swing your yearly labor-balance over to the negative side?"

"Hold on! I begin to follow you. But when you talk of throwing money out of the window——"

"What if I can prove that I'm putting you next not only your own worst leak, but next one of the biggest leaks in industry to-day? Suppose I show you that even a little group of twenty of you manufacturers, in this section alone, employed 69,000 new workers this year to keep up your combined regular forces of 44,000 men? Would that mean nothing to you in dollars and cents?

THE "WOP," THE "HUNKIE," AND THE "POLACK" NOW COUNT MORE THAN EVER.

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Couldn't you figure out for yourself that even if you should cut my estimate of eighty dollars cost a head in halves—even if you make allowance for a heavy shifting of unskilled labor in the less highly organized departments—the total waste of profits for all of your concerns together was in the neighborhood of $2,000,000 for the year? How long do men like you expect to keep it up? Do you think you can get away with this sort of thing indefinitely?"

The general manager is sitting back now, thinking hard, and watching the smoke-rings as they twist themselves out of shape against the invisible currents of the air. Presently he leans forward.

"Mr. Hartley, if you can prove one-quarter of your statements during the last ten minutes," he says, "you'll be putting me next a bigger thing than even you suspect. Clancy, will you ask the other members of our staff to come here? We'll dig down to bed-rock together on this stuff. And if you're ready with your figures, we might as well get it doped out right."

The Normal Turnover

While, like the general manager, you may begin to be convinced that the substitution of new men for old is a costly policy for industry, you are likely to be a believer in the widespread delusion that the worker (whether skilled or unskilled) is a born drifter. The fact is established, however, that not only is the Turnover involuntary on the part of labor, but that no firm is warranted in seeing it slip over the forty per cent. danger-line, without a thoroughgoing effort to cure the weak spots in its organization of which such excess is a trustworthy warning.

If you will bear in mind that but 1 per cent. of industrial employees die annually; that from but 4 to 5 per cent. are replaced because of absence due to prolonged illness; that under 8 per cent. leave for legitimate reasons; that only 5 per cent. are liable to discharge for cause; that a 6 per cent. allowance, only, is necessary to cover those employed on inevitably temporary work (such as building and construction and improvements); and that a 6 per cent. leeway is sufficient to include those who—because of race, religion, or politics—may prove temperamentally unsuited to shop organizations, you will begin to understand the scientific foundations upon which each firm may base its calculations, as to the limits within which it can build up a steady, efficient force.

Where the Blame Rests

"Well, Mr. Hartley," the superintendent begins when the half-dozen men are seated in the general manager's office, "I understand you lay our financial losses to our unsuspected Turnover; and put the responsibility for that Turnover up to the management."

"Squarely. I'm here, Mr. Gray, to be perfectly frank with you all, even if the truth is unpalatable.

"The phrase 'Unregulated Labor Turnover' is polite efficiency-English for 'Administrative Incompetence.' I've run down the facts of the normal Turnover, and I know that anything beyond it is essentially involuntary. If it weren't for the demoralization of thousands thrown off by the needlessly seasonal trades, only a small minority of the skilled workers—and a steadily dwindling majority of the unskilled—would be drifters."

"But hold on!" exclaims the assistant superintendent. "You say 'the needlessly seasonal trades.' You don't mean to tell us that every plant can run on an even keel twelve months of the year, do you?"

"If they don't learn how to do it, they'll be crowded to the wall. I can show you plants—once seasonal—that by revolutionizing their rush methods of intermittent manufacture, of advertising, of salesmanship, and of order-placing, and by occasionally laying off the entire force one day a week when they are only running on stocking-up on low-cost standard supplies, have cut their Turnover from an even higher figure than yours, to well within a fifty per cent. limit."

"And saved money?"

"And made money. Don't you believe me when I say that the Turnover is your biggest leak?"

"That's what we want to clear up," the general manager answers, picking up pencil and pad. "How do you figure out the estimates you gave me a while ago as to our

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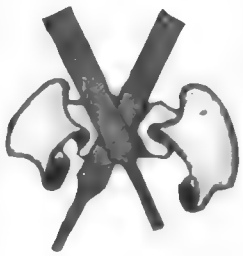
labor losses during the last year and a half? We've been sweating blood here trying to pare costs a thousand here and ten thousand there, and yet you talk of our having thrown $350,000 out of our employment-office window, and nothing to show for it."

What's the Real Product of a Factory?

"In the first place," Mr. Hartley begins, as he jots down some figures on the sheet of paper before him, "you've got to learn the latest economic truth that 'the real product of a factory is not materials but men.' It's as dangerous to efficiency—which, after all, is only another name for harmony—to keep on ripping out a trained worker here and there and replacing him at random, as it would be to rip out essential parts of your machinery, and then replace them with any old junk you happened to have handy on the premises.



"There isn't such a record in the country as a fifty-cent maximum cost for a new employee. You may hold the overhead charge for the upkeep of the employment office at that figure—provided you don't follow the best standards for investigating personal character and living conditions, for verifying working references, and for physical examination and efficiency tests. Even if your office charges (including the salary of a trained employment agent) stood you ten dollars apiece for every man taken on, you'd probably find it a big economy in the end. For the whole wastage of the Turnover hinges on not putting the right man on the right job at the right time, and on your not keeping him there by a square deal after you've taken the trouble to get him.

"I've followed this up in about every kind of plant, and you can take it from me that the first thing a man's up against, and the first expense the firm that hires him is up against, is his need for instruction."

"What's the matter with his foreman?" demands the assistant superintendent.

The Problem of Instruction

"There are usually a good many things the matter with his foreman. I'll come to that later. So far as the instruction goes, however, the trouble is that the foreman hasn't the time, or in most cases the faculty, to help him. Just knowing how a thing ought to be done, doesn't necessarily mean that a man is qualified to pass the information on. Particularly when a foreman has to do it so often that he is heartily sick of the job.

"Look here! Let's try to be fair. You put a foreman over a department to get the stuff out; and then you jump all over him because he can't do it with one hand, while he runs a school for new employees with the other. If he trains his men thoroughly, in a plant like this, he's bound to fall down on overseeing his end of the production. If he passes the new man over to some other worker, it's the same story. Either the fellow-worker won't bother with him, or somehow he can't get the information across. Or else, while he is doing it, maybe for several days running, he loafs on his job, and so balls up the balance of production.

"I've seen 100 machines standing idle on one floor, because (in the department next preceding it) two new men had smashed their machines, and blocked the whole flow of output for the factory. No one had warned them when they were put on their machines to 'turn her over easy' before they started up. So they had simply grabbed the belt-shifter, started full speed, and in addition to the damaged machinery, they landed two fellow-workers in the hospital, with broken pieces of steel in them."

"You don't mean to advocate having special men to train new employees, do you?" queries the general manager.

"You'll hardly get a really one hundred per cent. efficient force of men, in a highly organized plant, without trained instructors. Nor can you hold your force steady, after you've got them, without constant supervision to make sure that each individual standard is being maintained at the high-water mark."

"You think, then, that we probably waste several dollars while teaching a new man as we do it now?"

"If you'll run over the figures I've just been jotting down, Mr. Lawson, you'll find why I was more interested in your Turnover than in your cost of recent equipment."

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Cost of Instruction

Although the lack of expert supervision of new employees is one of the leading factors in the shifting of labor, it is only lately that students of the question have been able to offer such figures as the expert now offers to the general manager—a *minimum* schedule of *actual instruction costs*, based on the experience of some of the leading employers in this country.

These are listed as:

Unskilled laborers	$2.00 to	$3.00
Clerical force	4.00	7.00
Handy men and helpers	5.00	
Skilled mechanics	7.50	10.00
Semi-skilled workers	15.00	18.00

Add to these approximate figures the initial cost of 50 cents to $10.00 for employment costs, and you have the first two items of outlay for the employers involved in the substitution of new men for old.

Cost of Damage to Equipment

In addition to the ten odd dollars wasted on lost time in a majority of cases, it must be remembered that it is primarily the new man who breaks tools and wrecks machinery. The more costly the equipment, the higher must be the estimate of the loss to the employer. Hardly a firm that has worked out this angle of the expense of the Turnover, is willing to list the damage to equipment at less than an average of seven dollars per head.

Handy men and helpers	$7.00 to	$10.00
Skilled mechanics	1.00	10.00
Less skilled mechanics	5.00	10.00

Even with this third estimate added, you have only cleared away the preliminaries of employment, instruction, and breakage costs. You are now ready to deal with the more serious aspects, and the less easily determined financial wastage of the Turnover.

Cost of Lowered Production

No one need go into a factory himself in order to realize that at entry no new man can measure up to even a low standard of production. There are shops that have proved the fact (from their own experience) that it takes the average new mechanic from one to three months to meet the time-limits of his foreman. As a matter of actual record, he falls from three to five hours a day behind the pace of the seasoned piece-worker. But this phase of the question is economically bigger than the individual waste of wage.

In a well-organized plant each division depends for efficiency upon the continuous output of the division next preceding. Sometimes the slowing down of pace due to the breaking in of new employees is startling. It is because every minute so wasted leaves its mark on the balance-sheet of the firm that you will find this the most costly aspect of the "hiring and firing" problem.

For the sake of fairness to a wide range of industry, take the following *minimum* estimate of the costs of reduced production, which is based on the acknowledged losses involved for the less highly specialized type of plant:

Unskilled workers	$5.00 to	$8.00
Semi-skilled mechanics	18.00	30.00
Skilled workers	20.00	34.00
Piece-workers, miscellaneous helpers	25.00	33.00
Clerical force	20.00	

We must realize, however, that these figures do not attempt to cover the more demoralizing factors resulting from such decrease of output. The sense of friction, of uncertainty, and antagonism developed under such conditions, is as destructive to the machinery of shop-efficiency as if oil of vitriol were to be habitually substituted for a lubricant.

The Cost of Spoiled Work

For the same reason, any calculation as to spoiled work must be unsatisfactory, because it is based on incomplete data which will vary in the case of each individual plant. Nevertheless, the following estimate is at least worth quoting, because it is drawn from losses in a wide enough variety of factories to make it a danger-sign on the pathway along which no factory management should persist in traveling:

Handy men and helpers	$5.00 to	$10.00
Highly skilled mechanics	10.00	15.00
Less skilled	15.00	20.00

Something Bigger than the Employer's Direct Loss

The superintendent passes the penciled memoranda to the general manager with

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a confirmatory nod. "So that's how you ran up that eighty dollars—including employment costs—you loaded on us, Hartley."

"I'll guarantee that not a new man entered your gates during the last year who cost you a copper less."

"Yet you, yourself, halved that eighty dollars when you were talking about the group of twenty firms' having thrown away nearly $2,000,000 of profits during the last twelve months."

"I did that because this stuff is so new I wanted to be conservative. Yours is a highly organized plant, where the costs of shifting labor run higher than in the rough trades employing few skilled workers. Nevertheless, I wanted to strike a fair average for all concerned.

"You men think these figures too startling only because it's a new slant on old problems that you've accepted pretty much as you accept the law of gravitation. Their financial menace lies in the fact that they can be duplicated at random in any manufacturing center of the country. Of course I'm simply talking business now, and giving you what—from my point of view—is the less costly dollars-and-cents end of the Turnover."

"Does that mean you think there's something bigger involved than even the direct loss to the employer?"

"Something so big, Mr. Gray, that the calculations of simple arithmetic can't cover it. Look here. I don't mean to get sentimental over the worker. These days he's out for something more substantial than sympathy. But I've been in this Turnover game at first-hand, and I know pretty well how it hits the decent chaps who get their walking papers.

"I'm not fool enough to think that all foremen are 'petty tyrants,' or that all of the men they fire are suffering angels. The average foreman is what generations of the man higher up have made him. He's the product of the system he's been trained in, and that gives him a power he hasn't been educated to wield. But there isn't a factor to-day that contributes more to unemployment, and the so-called 'unrest' of labor, or that spreads more of bitterness, and the belief in the duty of antagonism toward the authority of the employer, than the existence of the unregulated Turnover. And as long as you let it remain unchecked, you'll find the inevitable by-products of your factories are idleness, discouragement, intemperance, and poverty.

"I don't need to ask if any one of you men has ever given a thought to what probably went on in the minds of those two thousand-odd workers you wasted last year; men who, for no legitimate reason, walked out of your factory gates for the last time on the say-so of Tom This, or Mike That. I tell you frankly that it's no wonder men come out of some of these plants ready to go in for any form of organization that will help them to get back at the system they realize no man is strong enough to break down alone.

"I could show you two hundred skilled workers, whom I've talked with—decent men, every one of them—who were thrown out without cause or warning from one plant last year. To-day they're doing more to breed class bitterness, and to foment labor disaffection in this locality, than all the I. W. W.s the police are ever likely to round up.

"You'll never again convince any one of those two hundred men that there can be such a thing as a square deal between capital and labor. And this instance isn't exceptional. It's what goes on all over the country. It's the logical outcome of a rotten system. But it hits back not only at the industry that fosters it, but eventually at the whole social fabric."

War Has Forced Problem to the Front

Ten years ago the coming and going of the unskilled worker was unregarded. Ellis Island guaranteed "plenty more where he came from." Even five years ago the business aspect of the unregulated Turnover among skilled workers—while its inconvenience might call for passing protest—was rarely discussed on its financial merits, excepting by the managing staffs of a small group of our most progressive and far-seeing employers. The phases of the law of gravitation that made themselves felt in the labor-market were generally accepted without question; unless, indeed, what were supposed to be their normal manifestations were disrupted by the upheaval of a strike.

But during the last eighteen months, the Allies have forced upon all our manufacturers in the East an abnormal aspect of the Turnover. To-day a dozen swords bar the shell-torn roads to immigration; and the "Wop," the "Hunkie," or the "Polack" has

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become an individual who counts; for he may either fill or leave vacant an appreciable gap in the American working force.

Thus in a wide area the war-boom has, to a large extent, reversed the traditional positions of the man who seeks, and the man who offers, employment. It has placed the wage-scale in the hand of the applicant, thereby ensure to employers the productive efficiency essential to future business success.

Employment Managers' Association

One of the most hopeful signs of the change in the relations which may some day develop between capital and labor, has been the formation, in a dozen states, of Employment Managers' Associations to discuss those errors in shop-organization that lie back of the unregulated Turnover.

JUST KNOWING HOW A THING OUGHT TO BE DONE, DOESN'T QUALIFY A MAN TO PASS THE INFORMATION ON.

and thereby forced concessions as to hours, the value of overtime, and the claims of organized labor. By the shifting of thousands of skilled men into a temporary industry, or into the workrooms of overstimulated trades, it has undermined for years to come the bed-rock of labor stability, long erroneously supposed to exist inside the walls of the so-called "standard" factories throughout the East.

Moreover, the stoppage of immigration not only comes at a time when we are facing the greatest industrial crisis, and the greatest industrial opportunity, the world has ever seen. It also comes at a time when the physically fit American may answer to the bugle-call rather than the factory whistle. Hundreds of thousands of our most efficient workers may be recruited from workrooms unfitted to train substitutes. Thus war abroad and at home has at last forced to the front the problem of the value of each individual worker to the industry which needs and can not do without him. And with this belated realization of his value, has also come the inauguration of what promises to be a wide-spread effort to standardize employment methods, and

The records of the companies represented (who during the past five years have proved their ability to conquer employment problems by a readjustment of values which placed equipment before men) speak for themselves upon their balance-sheets. Not only have they demonstrated the common-sense basis of wage, hour, and working conditions essential for keeping the Turnover within its normal limits, but they are doing pioneer work in establishing equilibrium in the seasonal trades and in developing that spirit of common fellowship which we are beginning to understand is vital to industrial efficiency.

How Some Companies Have Increased Profits

As a typical example may be quoted the experience of a member of a certain firm (handicapped by a seasonal output) who took over the administration of the employment office, and set himself to investigate

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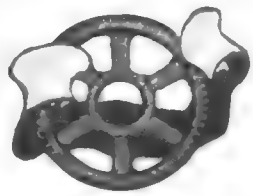
the causes that lay back of a costly Turnover of 150 per cent.

As a result he raised the standards of equipment and of tools, and developed a scientific employment and service division, extending the functions of the employment office so as to include the training and hygienic supervision of new employees. *He forbade the discharge of employees except through the authorized channels of the employment and welfare division.* He raised the average weekly wage by thirty-seven per cent. and reduced the weekly working hours from fifty-four to forty-eight.

He made provision for special instruction of foreign employees; for periodic physical examination, with special care of teeth and eyes; for sanitary standards in workrooms, dressing-rooms, toilets, lavatories, lunchrooms, and rest and recreation rooms. He organized a systematic follow-up system for absentees.

He reduced seasonal fluctuations in production by means of better methods of advertising, purchasing, and order-placing; and also by a uniform reduction of fifteen per cent. of the weekly working hours throughout the plant, during the weeks when trade conditions did not warrant a full-time schedule.

Nor did he rest there. *He substituted the transfer for the discharge of employees who fell below the standard.* He systematized advancement as a reward for efficiency; eliminated accidents; reduced tardiness to one-third of one per cent. of the working force, and he reduced the number of absentees to one and one-quarter per cent. (of which only one-half of one per cent. were without excuse).



He established a rate of pay for advance notice of quitting, adding a day's pay for each week of notice, not to exceed four weeks.

Finally, he assured daily contact with the employment and service division to at least one-fifth of the force, with the opportunity to all for complaint or suggestions.

That this was an experiment in good business, rather than social philanthropy, is proved by the fact that *he reduced the Turnover from 150 per cent. to 33.5 per cent.; and that owing to increased efficiency, manufacturing costs were reduced by 10 per cent., and production was increased by 42 per cent.*

No less striking is the case of a certain motor company that in 1912, under the old-type hiring and firing system, found itself taking on no less than 54,000 hands a year in order to keep up its average working force of 13,000. This was a Turnover of from 40 to 50 per cent. a month, or fully 400 per cent. a year.

From 1913 to October, 1914 but 7,000 men were hired to keep up an increased force of 17,000; a drop from 400 to 23 per cent. (reckoning on the upkeep of the original 13,000). The saving to the company was in the neighborhood of $2,000,000.

Back of this reduction of human wastage lies a scientific reorganization. First the work-day was reduced from ten to nine hours; then from nine to eight hours, *with an increase of efficiency of 44 per cent.* A high minimum day's wage was substituted for the former piece-work, or premium and bonus system. *The foreman's power of discharge was restricted; and in its place was set up a system of transfers, directed by a scientifically organized employment and welfare service.* The right to dismiss an employee from service was placed in the sole hands of the general superintendent and general manager. Fewer than ten men were discharged during the first months of 1915, out of a working force of 24,000.

A shop school in citizenship has been established for 1,500 non-English-speaking employees. Through a welfare and follow-up system, absenteeism has been reduced from 10 per cent. to one-half of one per cent. A spirit of attempted coercion has given place to one of cooperation, systematically substituted. The old-fashioned method of overspeeding has been done away with, and an intelligently coordinated output built up in its stead.

With the same number of men, and, in certain departments, without material change of layout and operations, the output of motors has jumped from 6,125 in a nine-hour day to 7,800 in an eight-hour day; and the assembling of radiator cores from 750 in nine hours to 1,300 in eight hours; while 60 men now turn out 1,200 gasoline tanks in the eight-hour limit, against the former nine-hour output of 800 by 65 men under identical working conditions.

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How to Standardize the Turnover

It is not difficult to understand from these examples (or scores of similar standardizations of the employment problem), that the pulse of the normal Turnover can only beat in a thoroughly healthy organization.

While the problem of each firm must, to a certain extent, remain individual, we now know that the following essentials must be built into the framework of every organization seeking efficiency and the elimination of the costly economic and social waste which was inseparable from earlier industrial standards:

1. Learn the cost of your Turnover in order to know how much money you are justified in spending to control it.

2. Analyze the causes of your Turnover, tabulating it by departments, so that a daily follow-up system may keep the management in touch with earnings, defective work, absenteeism, tardiness, and their foreman's ability to handle men.

3. Recognize the fact that the scientific and functionalized employment office is an essential part of the general productive organization.

4. Secure a broad-minded and courteous, as well as expert, employment agent, if the size of your force warrants it; or combine with other small firms in your vicinity in financing the maintenance of a scientifically organized and attractively furnished cooperative employment office. Realize that securing the right type of personality for this position will count more than in the case of any other member of your staff.

5. Select, after due notice to the employment office, the right man for each vacant job, according to detailed written specification; choose him from a waiting-list covering characteristics, personal and working references, and home conditions.

6. Keep a separate statistical record for each man, including date of employment, and complete tabulation of transfers and changes of occupation; of complaints by, or against, the man in question; and date of quitting and reasons.

7. Make certain that the spirit of assistance is substituted for the military spirit of command; and ensure expert instruction and supervision to all new employees.

8. Establish a fellowship division, to cultivate a spirit of cooperation and personal relations between your management and your employees. Follow up cases of absence due to illness, and encourage habits of temperance and of personal hygiene.

9. Provide standardized sanitary working conditions, with adequate light, natural or mechanical exhaust ventilation, artificial heat when required, and an approved type of washing, dressing, and lunch room facilities.

10. Enforce standardized safety regulations, and provide efficient first-aid treatment for even minor injuries.

11. Pay a weekly wage based on careful investigation of the local costs of living.

12. Promote mutual-aid associations; and since no worried worker is efficient, establish an emergency loan fund, including sick benefits.

13. Make sure that dismissal by the foreman does not exist; that judicious transfers are made through the employment division, thereby conserving your trained force; and that discharges for cause are approved by the management.

14. Interview all those who quit voluntarily, and tabulate and analyze causes of leaving.

15. Establish systematized promotion based on the worker's record.

16. Reduce seasonal lay-offs and shutdowns by more scientific methods of advertising, purchasing, selling, and output standards.

Elaborate as may seem the details involved in such reduction of the labor Turnover, the principles underlying its remedies are nevertheless as simple as they are sound. The passing of the petty boss from the workroom, and the substitution of a square-deal policy toward the employee, are neither novel nor revolutionary ideas, however far-reaching their effect may be. In a business world which neither permits nor condones the luxury of stupidity, the elimination of dominating personalities (whether of the foreman or the man at the top) from the scientific adjustment of the machinery of production, seems clearly necessary.

But the fact must not be lost sight of that the personality of no superintendent, or manager, or foreman can counterbalance in the mind of the worker the fundamental essentials of wages, hours, and working conditions. The economic fallacy of the long shift; the handicap of a pay-envelope that

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AS YOU TAKE YOUR PLACE IN LINE, YOU HAVE BECOME A UNIT IN A NATIONAL MENACE TO THE EMPLOYER, TO LABOR, AND TO SOCIETY AT LARGE.

gives the advantage in choice of a steady force to a competitor; the criminal folly of gambling on the physical endurance and lessened output of those exposed to foul air injurious fumes, dust, and excessive heat; to overcrowded machinery, ineffective lighting, lack of decent sanitary facilities, and to the evils of automatically induced industrial disease and occupational intemperance—these are no longer reckoned as the theories of the sentimentalist, but as facts bearing on the problem of the Turnover which must be faced and turned to advantage by every manufacturer who hopes to keep his place in the front ranks of profitable production.

Few of us have a full and clear notion of what we mean when we talk about a system of Universal Military Training. After two years of agitation, the military authorities at Washington have at last agreed upon a system which they recommend to Congress for the establishment of Universal Training as the means of our national defense. George Creel has been searching every angle of this great proposition. In the May number of EVERYBODY'S he will present what we believe to be the most thorough and enlightening article on Universal Training that has yet been published.

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DÉSIRÉ-JOSEPH, CARDINAL MERCIER, ARCHBISHOP OF MALINES, PRIMATE OF BELGIUM

CARDINAL MERCIER, Archbishop of Malines, was acclaimed "the greatest hero of the war" by a vast gathering of eminent Americans of all faiths and professions assembled last January in Carnegie Hall, New York, to protest against the German deportations of Belgian workmen.

Certainly his heroism in risking life and liberty by lifting up his voice against the oppression of his flock, has made his name an honor to Belgium, and an honor to Christianity throughout the world.

The illustrious Belgian prelate was even before the war a most prominent figure. Eleven years ago, Mercier was a professor at the University of Louvain. His science and talent were so highly appreciated, not only in Belgium but also in Rome, that when Cardinal Goossens, Archbishop of Malines, died, the Pope called on Professor Mercier to become the Belgian archbishop's successor. This is perhaps without precedent, the archbishop being usually chosen from among the bishops. A year later he was created cardinal.

It is a little-known fact that, as the Archbishop of Malines, he enjoys the right of precedence over all other archbishops of his faith.

After the death of Pius X. in August, 1914, notwithstanding the old tradition that an Italian prelate should be elected Pope, and the fact that Belgium, already invaded by Germany, had been forced into war, several votes were cast in the Conclave for Cardinal Mercier.

It is said that if the war had not occurred, the Conclave, breaking with a centuries-old tradition, would have been inclined to elect the Belgian cardinal as the head of the Catholic Church.

A year before the war, Cardinal Mercier, long since a prominent member of the Belgian Royal Academy of Science, Letters, and Fine Arts, was unanimously elected by his colleagues, of all denominations, as president of this most distinguished body.

Since the invasion of Belgium and the occupation of the greater part of the country, Cardinal Mercier has commanded the admiration of the world for his patriotism, dignity, and his splendid devotion to his fellow countrymen in their suffering.

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A MESSAGE FROM CARDINAL MERCIER

Cardinal Mercier is now practically a prisoner in Belgium. War conditions have made it difficult for him to express to the world, except through official Church channels, his views and feelings about the violation of Belgium. Never since the beginning of the war has he written for any magazine. EVERYBODY'S *feels deeply gratified at having succeeded in overcoming the many difficulties in the way of reaching the illustrious prelate to secure the following message to the American people.*

Malines, January 23, 1917.

To the Editor of EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE:

You have very kindly expressed the desire to receive from Belgium a page of psychology and history, which will inform you in regard to the state of the soul of the Belgian nation, under pressure of events of the present hour.

I shall not conceal from you that for an instant I hesitated to respond to your request, because I feared that I might seem to deviate from the line of conduct that I have laid down for myself since the commencement of the war. As a shepherd of souls, I wish only to serve the moral and religious interests of my people. I should not wish that my contribution to a review, even though it be EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE, should be interpreted by either our enemies or our friends as an intrusion into that domain which, in certain circles, is disdainfully called the "Domain of Politics."

But the objects of the present war and the many conflicts connected with it, into which religious conscience has been drawn, are outside the domain of politics.

Three times during the last two and a half years, we have endeavored to make the voice of the Belgian Episcopate heard outside our frontiers. The first time, to protest against the sacrilegious violation of our territory and to affirm the right of existence of small nations; the second time, to protest against the calumny which attempted to transform into culprits the victims of massacres perpetrated by the German armies in Belgium, and also at this second time to endeavor to obtain recognition, before an international tribunal, of the upright conduct of the Belgian people and the justice of their cause; finally, a third time, we appealed to public opinion in order to prevent the entire male population of our country and of northern France from being carried away, like a band of slaves, into the country of the enemy and there compelled to employ arms against their own country.

The mass meeting held at Carnegie Hall, New York, December fifteenth—a magnificent assembly of the intellectual, social, and religious élite of the American nation—has shown to the world that our thought has been fully comprehended.

With what pride and what comfort we have heard your speakers proclaim that international law, as codified in the Hague Convention—especially Article 46, "respect for the rights of the family"; Article 52, which forbids the occupant to subject the inhabitants of an occupied country to requisitions which are not "required by the needs of the army of occupation"; Articles 50 and 52, finally, of which the first permits the employment,

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Drawn by F. Luis Mora

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even of prisoners of war, only on works "which have no connection with the operations of the war," and of which the second stipulates that "the services required of the inhabitants for the needs of the army of occupation shall not impose upon the population the obligation to take part in operations of war against their own country"—with what pride and comfort, I say, we have heard your speakers proclaim that this codified international law is the fruit of the collective work of civilized nations during many generations; hence, it is the common patrimony of these various civilized and civilizing nations, and, therefore, to destroy international law and the general interests of civilization, is to pillage and destroy the heritage of the United States!

If there is a people in the world whose rôle it is to safeguard the liberty of labor, is it not that nation which, half a century ago, placed the crown of glory upon Lincoln, and which is the result of a civil war for the abolition of slavery?

But if I might venture to formulate a suggestion, it would be the following: For two years we have been lost in admiration of the phalanxes of disinterested citizens who spontaneously, leaving their occupations, their firesides, their soil, have come, one after another, under the high patronage of the United States, of Spain, and of Holland, to supervise the generous contributions of food and clothing which our sister nations have sent for the relief of our distress. If England and France are willing to consent to this relief of Belgium, it is because of their faith in your supervision. Why should you not offer to the German empire this same service in the domain of morals and of international law?

Why, since it is a question of protecting a patrimony which belongs to you in common with other civilized nations, why should you not, in concert with other neutral states, impose upon the power which temporarily occupies Belgium and northern France, your right of supervision?

France and Belgium would have their representatives who, under the presidency of the delegate of a neutral power, would form, with the representatives of Germany, an international tribunal. This tribunal would examine into the occupation or profession of the deported men, or at least of a certain number of them; it would make a preliminary classification between manual laborers and civilians belonging to other professions; it would ascertain whether the workmen were employed or unemployed at the time of their deportation; whether or not they were maintained by public charity; whether they subscribed voluntarily or under constraint to their deportation and their labor contract; this tribunal would ascertain the causes of unemployment; and, finally, it would inquire into the treatment to which the deported men, here as well as in Germany, have been subjected.

For some days, a certain number of workmen have been coming back from Germany, worn out, thin, ill, declaring unanimously that they have suffered from hunger and from cold; many have added that they have been insulted, beaten, flogged because they refused to work or to declare themselves voluntary workers. But at the same time that these deported men, who have no doubt become more of an incumbrance than a help, have been sent back to their firesides, the deportations have been renewed in other parts of the country. As I write these lines, levies are being made in Brussels and in ten of the contiguous communes.

EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE is a powerful influence. In placing it at the service of the Belgian people, you place it, sir, at the service of the Freedom of Labor and of the Family.

Belgium once more will bless the great and noble American nation, which has added a new and glorious page to the history of civilization.

(Signed) D. J. Card. Mercier, Arch. de Malines.

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Le "Everybody's Magazine" est une puissance. En la mettant au service du peuple belge, vous la mettez, Monsieur le Directeur, au service de la liberté du travail, et de la famille; la Belgique vous bénira la grande et noble nation Américaine qui aura ajouté une nouvelle et glorieuse page à l'histoire de la civilisation.

+ D. J. Card. Mercier, Archb. de Malines.

A PLEA FOR BELGIUM

THE grateful homage to the American nation for the moral and material support already given to unfortunate Belgium expressed in the preceding message was written by Cardinal Mercier on January twenty-third, just before the diplomatic break between the United States and Germany.

The plight of Belgium is now much more serious, and the suffering of the Belgian people is increasing every day. An American relief-agent has written in his report:

"I have seen thousands of people lined up in the snow or rain, soaked and chilled, waiting for bread and soup. I have returned to the distributing stations at the end of the day and have found men, women, and sometimes children, still standing in line, but later compelled to go back to their homes, cold, weak, and miserable."

Among the destitute there are more than a million *children* who are dependent upon food supplied by charity. The suffering of hundreds of thousands of women is no less appalling. Innumerable appeals for aid reach Cardinal Mercier every day. He personally visits the poor and destitute. Very recently the Cardinal said:

"I have seen hundreds of my flock in peril and tears. During three days, from morn to eve, I went about the regions whence the foremost workmen and artisans were taken by force into exile. I entered more than a hundred half-empty homes. Husbands were absent; children were orphans; sisters, sad-eyed, and with inert arms, sat beside their sewing-machines. A gloomy silence reigned in these cottages. It was as though there were a corpse in the house."

Cardinal Mercier endeavors to relieve the untold misery throughout all the country. But he can not aid these unfortunates, on the verge of starvation, without *our* generous financial support. We therefore earnestly appeal to our readers and to all the American public, for contributions to this most worthy cause. Your contribution will be used especially for the relief of women and children—of orphans; the most pitiable victims of the war.

Your donation will be a token of your sympathy for the illustrious prelate who has won the admiration of the whole world, regardless of nationality or creed.

All donations will be acknowledged in EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE, and the entire amount will be forwarded by us to Cardinal Mercier, without any deduction for expenses.

Make checks payable to: "Cardinal Mercier Subscription," and mail them to EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE, Spring and Macdougal Streets, New York City.

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THE HIGH COST OF PEGGY

By

William Almon Wolff

ILLUSTRATED BY W. E. HILL

JIMMY BURTON stood just inside the door of the great dining-room for a minute, looking around while he waited for a head waiter to come and guide him to a table. He felt a little like an orphan. He smiled at the thought that came to him suddenly. What he was thinking of was a cartoon that had shown an eager, half-clad youngster staring hungrily through the glass window of a restaurant, and feasting, mentally, upon the good things within. Not that he was hungry—or any hungrier, at least, than it was pleasant to be when such alluring food was at his call and his pockets were lined with the money to pay for it.

And yet, in a way, Jimmy wasn't so far in spirit from the youngster in that cartoon. He wasn't in rags. He looked pretty fine. He was arrayed in the modern equivalent of purple and fine linen. Purple and fine linen have gone out of style, perhaps, but Jimmy, with the aid of the tailor upon whom, a week before, he had been disposed to frown as an extravagance, had done his best. The staid black and white of the solitary male became him, and, though it is a sobering uniform, there had, when Jimmy first stepped within the door, been a sort of glow about him. He was fairly tall, and he held himself very straight, so that you got the full value of his broad shoulders. And he had been smiling at first, so that his white, even teeth were fully displayed. And, altogether, there had been a fine, cheerful sort of exuberance about him.

But it hadn't survived his first, questioning look about the room, which was well-filled. His smile vanished altogether as a head waiter, bowing, stood before him.

"One," said Jimmy, with a most obvious disgust. And tamely he followed the man to a small table, obscurely placed, and sat down to regard the dinner-card, frowning. He gave a perfunctory order to a disappointed waiter. And then he looked about the room again, and shook his head, frowning still.

He could see now that he had made a great mistake. For Jimmy this was a red-letter night. He was beginning, in this unpromising way, a celebration. In the afternoon Jimmy had had great news. He had been called into the private office of his chief, and things had been said concerning him and his work that had made him stand, shifting uncomfortably from one foot to the other, while his cheeks grew hot and he was sure that he was blushing like a girl.

He knew enough, he told himself, to discount a lot of what the chief had said. But, after all, there was a certain residue that he couldn't discount. There was nothing abstract about a raise from fifty dollars a week to seventy-five. When he had made every allowance that common sense dictated for the chief's inclination to flatter his men—an inclination which, curiously enough, Jimmy had never had occasion to notice before—the fact remained that he must have made good. The jump to New York six months before, made with misgiving and doubt, had been justified.

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And so Jimmy, smiling beatifically, and falling an easy victim to those experts in physiognomy who ply the beggar's trade in New York, had gone home, filled with the conviction that he was called upon to celebrate his good-fortune. Almost at once disillusionment had begun. He had been too busy to make friends since he had come to New York. One or two intimates, men he had known in college, had failed him: trying to reach them by telephone, he had found them out of town, or otherwise engaged.

Not that he was particularly sorry for that. After all, the particular sort of celebration he had in mind involved a dinner in some place where the music was good and the food better and the service best of all, with a girl across the table; a girl who need not know what they were celebrating, but would exalt her host by being the most beautiful and the most wonderfully dressed girl in the room, and who, after dinner, would share with him aisle seats, far down, at a theatre where the actors would be annoyed because Jimmy Burton had brought with him a girl so ravishingly beautiful that the audience had no eyes for them, and who, finally, would go with him for supper somewhere where one could dance.

"SHE'S RIGHT," SAID JIMMY DOURLY. "OH, PEGGY—I OUGHT NEVER TO HAVE DONE IT——"

And he knew no such girl. He knew girls, of course, who would have served his purpose. But one of them lived in Washington, and another in Cleveland, and a third

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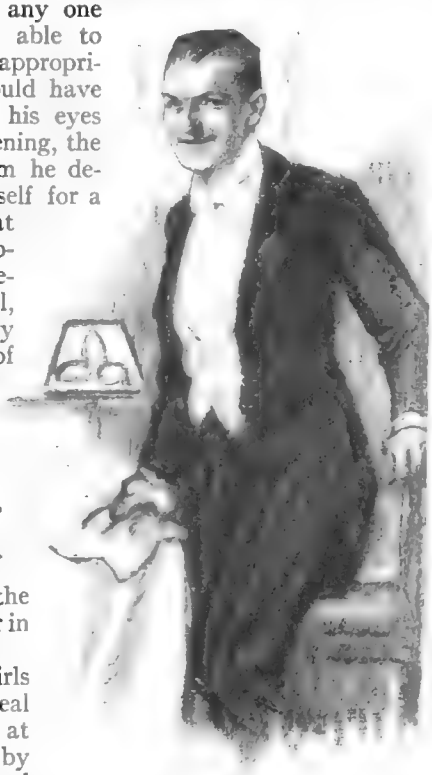
in New Orleans. And another, who had once lived in New York, had been indiscreet enough to marry a chap in the army, and was now in the Philippines.

All about him, of course, were girls, girls he didn't know, almost any one of whom, had he been able to eliminate her escort and appropriate her for himself, would have become immediately, in his eyes at least, and for the evening, the most beautiful one whom he desired. He amused himself for a time by imagining that the girls of whom he approved most heartily reciprocated his approval, and wished that they were with him instead of with the poor creatures who were actually endowed with their priceless company. But this, he found, was a poor sort of amusement; he thought it was probably about as empty as the vain staring through the window of the youngster in the cartoon.



JIMMY GOT UP, SWAYING A LITTLE.

It angered him to see girls upon whom he set the seal of his approval smiling at men who were, he felt, by no means to be compared with him. But it enraged him to see, at certain tables, wistful, lovely, radiant beings who were wasting their sweetness upon the desert air of dinner with mere parents. That—oh, that was damnable!

He did, though, get a morbid sort of enjoyment, after that thought came to him, out of looking around for tables at which it was conceivable that he might really fit in. And suddenly his jaw dropped, and he stared, in speechless indignation, at the girl who, all joking aside, was unquestionably the most decorative person in that room. There were two girls at that table, and one man. That was what made Jimmy so angry at first. Two such girls—and one man! He sat, this monster of selfishness, this exponent of monopoly, with his back to Jimmy, so that Jimmy couldn't see his face. But that didn't matter; Jimmy's imagination was vivid enough to portray the creature's bloated and degraded features. And, in any case, Jimmy could have spared no time to look at him; the girls, and one of them in particular, required his undivided attention—and rewarded it in overflowing measure.

One was clad in pink; the other in a light and delicate green. The one in pink was fair, and it is a remarkable tribute to the other, the one in green, to say that in her presence the pink girl seemed only pretty. Jimmy knew, after his second searching glance, that this girl in green was the girl he had been dreaming of for years. He couldn't have described her; even after he knew her well his efforts to describe her had always a certain incoherence.

As she sat there she did not look so very tall, and yet she was not short. She was slim, but from the foamy stuff of her dress her white shoulders rose in lovely, gracious curves. She held her head very straight; it was crowned by a great mass of hair that was almost, but not quite, red. Jimmy couldn't see her eyes properly; most of the time, as she was sitting, he could see only her profile. But occasionally, just for a moment, she turned to the miscreant who sat between her and the pink girl, and Jimmy was dazzled by the vision of red lips parted in a smile, of sparkling eyes.

Incredibly, though, it was the pink girl who seemed to engage the greater share of the attention of the insensate man who had so suddenly become Jimmy's arch enemy. It may as well be admitted that Jimmy forgot his breeding and stared, frankly, incessantly. Food was set before him, and, absent-mindedly, he partook of it. But, in effect, he feasted only upon the sight of the girl in green. And his anger mounted as he saw what was going on at her table.

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Only one staring, rudely, unpardonably, would have seen what Jimmy saw.

The truth was that the green girl was being neglected—shamefully, outrageously neglected. The man and the pink girl were discreet. But they couldn't elude Jimmy's all-seeing eye. He saw their utter absorption in one another; he saw the way their fingers touched for a moment, from time to time, as their hands stole down. It was a revolting sight. The fact that they were, obviously, making an effort to be pleasant to the green girl, to keep her from feeling that she wasn't welcome; that she was an unwanted third in their party, didn't appease Jimmy.

And then, all at once, and without the least warning, the man turned around in his chair and looked about the room. Dazed, unbelieving, disposed to pinch himself to see if he was awake, Jimmy recognized him. He saw the sudden gleam of delighted recognition in Bill Madison's eye; saw him rise, laughing, and, excusing himself to the two girls, start toward his, Jimmy's, table, while green girl and pink girl both turned upon him eyes full of pleasant and welcoming anticipation. Poor old Bill—good old Bill, whom Jimmy had been slandering! Jimmy got up, swaying a little, and in a moment he was crushing Bill's hand in a mighty grip.

"For the love of Mike! Thought you were in Pittsburgh!" said Bill. "You old horse-thief! Say—come on over! I want you to meet my wife!"

"Married? *You!*" said Jimmy.

Two minutes of explanations may well be skipped. Talk of letters and invitations gone astray; all that sort of thing.

"So here we are—sort of final stage of the honeymoon!" said Bill. "Taking in the white lights of Broadway before we beat it home and I get back to work. Say, Jimmy—you've got to break any date you've got for the evening. Fact is you'll have to help me out. Chap that was to trail along for Peggy Harper fell down on us. Theatre when we get away from here—got a box. Got a table for supper, too—and I can't dance with two girls, can I?"

"We know all about you, Mr. Burton," said Eleanor Madison, smiling at him, when he had been introduced. "Bill talks about you all the time, and I've been passing it on to Peggy while we waited for your reunion over there to break up——"

"I never was so glad to get a man all to myself in my life!" said Peggy, pathetically. "You haven't seen them, of course, Mr. Burton, so you can't appreciate my feelings; but they've been so nice and they've tried so hard to keep me from feeling that I was in the way! And I've been wondering which I'd better get—headache or toothache——"

JIMMY MISSED UTTERLY THE RIGIDITY OF HER FEATURES IN CERTAIN MOMENTS AS SHE APPRAISED HIM, WEIGHED HIM.

Protests from the pink girl. Low and unconvincing growls from Bill Madison. And from Jimmy nothing but an idiotic grin. He was reflecting that he had been unjust to Bill again. The chances were that he'd married the pink girl, or, at least, hopelessly committed himself to marrying her, before he'd seen Peggy. And, of course, being on his honeymoon, he was not to be held too strictly to account. It turned out that Jimmy was about right, too. Peggy and Bill's wife had been at school together. And Peggy had been maid of honor.

"I wanted you for my best man, of course," said Bill, indignantly. "When I didn't hear from you, it pretty nearly

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crabbed the wedding! I didn't feel as if I were really getting married without having you around! I suppose you'll get my letter sometime——"

The murderous look that came into Jimmy's eye was due to his recollection of other weddings in which he had, in a manner of speaking, participated. If you were best man you always paired off with the prettiest bridesmaid, or the maid of honor, if there was one. Jimmy decided, suddenly, to become a Socialist. He remembered, bitterly, an article he had read lately about the efficiency of the post-office department!

"It's a shame you weren't there," Peggy was saying. "It was the nicest wedding I ever was at! The house-party was for four days——"

Four days!

Still, those days were gone. The dead past held them and wouldn't disgorge them. This was to-night, anyhow.

He had a gorgeous time. He and Peggy talked, shamelessly, through the play, which was a frothy musical comedy of the frothiest sort, and he found that she came fully up to the promise of her looks in every respect in which she did not exceed it. And later he discovered that she danced as well as she talked, and that she had a good disposition, because she didn't at all mind his stupidity about the steps that had come into favor in the last few months, while he had been so busy. He danced once with Bill's wife, because that seemed to be in order, while Bill danced with Peggy; but after that none of the four heeded the conventions at all. And it was pretty late when they finally decided that the party really was over.

"Good work, Jimmy," said Bill, as they came into the street. "You saved my life!"

Jimmy babbled. No other word describes the sounds he made.

"We'll take Peggy home," Bill went on to say, with that utter lack of perception which, as Jimmy now remembered, had always distinguished him. "She lives away up on Riverside Drive, and you needn't—Here—taxi——"

"Taxi nothing!" said Jimmy. "I've got a hunch! Let's walk over to the Avenue and get a couple of hansoms! They're always prowling around there—and a hansom's got a taxi beaten to death for comfort——".

Carried by acclamation, that suggestion was. Peggy let her hand rest lightly on Jimmy's arm as she lifted her skirts and stepped out across the street with him, while the other couple went on ahead.

"That was clever of you," she said. "And nice, too. They're dying to be alone together, the way you can be, in a hansom——"

There was nothing the matter with the ending of Jimmy's celebration, no matter how badly it had begun. It takes a long time to reach the northern limits of Riverside Drive in a hansom that is driven through the park, if the driver thinks it ought to take a long time. And the drivers of New York who have resisted the lure of the taximeter and clung to their hansoms are kindly men, and wise, and discerning.

That was early in October. In New York the order of the seasons is reversed. The city stirs itself then after its summer rest. Theatres, museums, opera, concerts, all open to the chill winds of autumn as flowers do in spring. Before Jimmy the entranced, the infatuated, the city lay, all glowing with delights that Peggy, as he soon found, could be induced to share with him. Had their meeting been different, had there not been that little zest that came to them from the need of withdrawing from the Madisons, would they have found one another so delightful? Had Jimmy not had his great news that day, had he not been in just the mood of that great night, would Peggy have seemed so fair? It doesn't matter. Things were as they were.

Peggy's laughter rang in his ears when he called her up the next day. His work was easing up a little, though, of course, for a few days, he would be busy, settling into the routine of his new job. But could she, couldn't she, meet him for tea? She could, and would, and did. Certainly she liked him, watching his enthusiasm, his obvious delight in her, that made every look he gave her a tribute so sincere that old ladies, seeing him, smiled, and nodded, and envied Peggy, with memory shining in their eyes.

Wonderfully, Peggy made room for him in the full days of her crowded winter. Within a week he had dined with her family and passed with flying colors the examination through which Mrs. Harper put him. Jimmy liked Mrs. Harper. She looked like Peggy—Peggy looked like her—which is

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right? She was taller than her daughter; she achieved, so, a certain stateliness that, Jimmy thought, Peggy would never have. Her years sat lightly upon her. They had touched her hair, very faintly, with silver. But her eyes were as bright, her cheeks as glowing, as Peggy's own. Here was a woman who had resolutely refused to surrender to maternity, to the cares of the housekeeper; who had preserved, as nearly inviolate as might be, the citadel of her youth.

Jimmy, seeing her with eyes that looked only at Peggy's mother, missed utterly the hardness of the lines about her mouth, the rigidity of her features in certain moments as she appraised him, weighed him.

He liked Peggy's father, too. He saw a tall man, with a drooping white mustache and thin white hair, whose smile and voice alike had a deprecatory quality; whose eyes looked like the eyes of a man who is always rather tired, and never quite catches up with his rest. But let there be no mistake: there was nothing pathetic about Mr. Harper. He was obviously and infinitely proud of his wife and his daughter. He approved of Jimmy and his utter absorption in Peggy with a quizzical, whimsical look.

In three minutes Jimmy and Mr. Harper knew all about one another. Jimmy was immensely respectful, as it became him to be when he understood that Peggy's father was the Harper of Cresswell, Harper & Scott, the great and famous law firm that had, at one time and another in its distinguished history, numbered an ex-President of the United States and several governors and lesser fry in its membership. A great firm. There might be—indeed, as Jimmy knew, there were—others that had more business and made more money, but there was none of higher rank.

Even that night, intoxicated as he was by the sheer delight of being with Peggy, Jimmy was a little awed, a little scared. He hadn't really appraised Peggy before. He had understood, vaguely, that she was expensive; that the clothes she wore were the sort that cost a great deal more than he could afford to give his wife for her adornment. But he had let that understanding remain vague—purposely, perhaps. But this apartment in which Peggy lived seemed to underline things he had been prepared to gloss over. Its high ceilings, its rich decoration and furniture, the deep, soft pile of the rugs, the great, limitless vista from its windows, the sense of room after room stretching away beyond those he could see, the casual remarks that made him understand that there were two floors—it had a sort of cumulative effect. He hadn't understood that cave-dwelling in New York could represent such luxury, could demand such wealth.

Jimmy was conscious of a certain depression as he went home that night. Sitting on top of a 'bus, he turned to look at the great pile that he had left, and shook his head. His two rooms in Washington Square were comfortable enough. He had taken them in a fit of extravagance, regretted once or twice. But they looked dingy when he switched on his lights that night. Somehow, he couldn't visualize Peggy smiling at him from the depths of the big armchair that balanced the one in which he sat down to think things out. But he came out of that mood with a start and a grin.

"Silly ass!" he said to himself. "That's not the idea at all!"

And it wasn't. He'd been dreaming dreams. The chief had been pretty definite: there was almost sure to be another raise at the first of the year. He had a goodish bit put by; he'd had few chances, in the last year or so, to spend money. And he'd been lucky in some investments. The chief had dropped a hint about giving him a chance to buy some stock; he'd been able to say that if the chance came he would take it. What with one thing and another he'd been able to see a house, small, of course, but good enough, in some good suburb, with a small car to go about in, and a club for golf and tennis, and good times generally.

From that mood, too, and from his dream, Jimmy roused himself. All alone as he was, he could feel his cheeks growing hot. Talk about counting chickens before they were hatched! For the dream depended upon Peggy—and to think of Peggy so! But, after all, he did think of her, and his face hardened suddenly. He'd think and he'd do more than think.

Swiftly they passed through the early stages of knowing one another. Before Christmas they had become intimate. They were Peggy and Jimmy to one another; when they were together there were odd intervals of silence, which neither wished

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to break. Jimmy trembled on the verge of his declaration; he was almost sure of her, and yet he was afraid, whenever a moment came that was alive with opportunity, lest he end this intimacy with her that made his life so infinitely richer than he had ever dreamed it might be.

Few indeed were the days in which he did not see her. Sometimes, when his work allowed it, he got away early from the office, and met her for tea. And there were Saturday afternoons, and Sundays, and in each week three or four evenings, at least. Peggy's friends began to understand that if they wanted her they must ask him, too, and they did—though they would have asked him for his own sake, fast enough, had he not been so utterly Peggy's property. Often he dined in the great apartment on the Drive, and one curious thing gradually penetrated his consciousness.

On the first night Peggy's mother had been extraordinarily gracious; he had found it surprisingly easy to talk with her. Mr. Harper had been no less gracious, but there had been odd and subtle reserves about his manner. Now, as he grew more and more intimate with them, and more at home in the household, he had a curious feeling that Mrs. Harper was, in some subtle way, withdrawing herself, receding a little from him, while, at the same time, Mr. Harper, after a tentative period, seemed to have made up his mind quite definitely to like him, and was advancing toward him, revealing more and more of himself.

"WELL," SAID MRS. HARPER FLATLY. "THERE IT IS." WITH FOUR WORDS SHE WAS ABLE TO MAKE JIMMY'S PRIDE IN THAT EXTRA THOUSAND LOOK RIDICULOUS.

Really, it wasn't until later that Jimmy could put this thing so definitely as that.

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He was much too deeply engrossed in Peggy herself to weigh nice shades of manner in her parents. But he was, very vaguely, conscious of this readjustment, and, inevitably, it affected his relations with Mr. and Mrs. Harper; relations which were, of course, important, no matter how much or how little weight he was disposed to give them.

It was just after the New Year holiday, when the chief's hint of another raise had materialized, that Jimmy found his voice. Stumbling, awkward, incredibly bashful, he made his clumsy avowal of something that Peggy already knew. She stopped him, her eyes shining, her white arms drawing him down to her.

"Jimmy—you dear," she said, brokenly. "Did you think I didn't know? Yes—and yes—and yes—oh, my dear—of course I will . . . Love you, Jimmy? Why—how could I help loving you! Ever since that night with Eleanor and Bill I've thought and thought, and I wondered if you were going to care—and just lately I've been almost sure——"

Jimmy held her close, crushing her fragrance in his arms, as though afraid that if he let her go she would elude him, even now. And for a long time they sat close, in the growing darkness, that had been dark, really, before he spoke. And she stirred at last, and after a moment he freed her, and she stood up, and looked from the window at the river, flowing clear and cold, with the sparkle of countless lights reflected from its surface.

"Oh, Jimmy!" she said. "You've wrecked my hair! We're going to be dreadfully late. I've got to make myself presentable again before we go."

And then, a little later, in a taxicab, because Mr. and Mrs. Harper, too, were dining out, and had the big closed car, he was beside her, her hand clasped in his, reveling in the pressure of her, warm and glowing under the silken wrap that covered her.

"Mother—" she said, "—Jimmy, dear, just for now, we'll keep it to ourselves. Mother thinks—she says you're poor—she's been afraid."

"She's right," said Jimmy, dourly. "Oh, Peggy—I ought never to have done it——"

"Jimmy! If—oh, if you hadn't, I would! I—I'm so—Jimmy—I'm perfectly shameless about wanting you. And mother will come around. It'll be all right, dear, all right. And to-night— oh, to-morrow we'll talk about money and living and all the prosaic, horrid things. To-night—it's just to-night."

But to-morrow, when it came, was just to-day.

There was the glorious adventure of the ring—the ring that, when it was ready, she slipped upon her finger for a moment, and then hid from him and all the world. And there were other adventures! And a day when Jimmy, pretending to be stern and rigid, laid before her a statement of his affairs.

"We can do this, and that," he said. "And this will cost so much, and that so much, and there'll be this much left over. And——"

"Oh, Jimmy!" she sighed. "I'm so stupid! Those figures don't mean a thing to me! I've never been taught—but of course there'll be enough. And I'm going to try so hard to be good, and helpful——"

"There's a way, dear," he said, hesitating, stammering a little over the words he wanted. "You know—little things count up so. And lately—I've been thinking—there'll be so much to do, so many things to get when—when we're married——"

"Yes!" she said, her eyes shining. "Oh, Jimmy, I'm getting ready, too—in ways you're not to know about——"

"If we went a little easy on taxis and oh—all sorts of little, trifling things that really don't matter much—" he went on, vaguely. "You see—I've been living up to what I get pretty well lately. And I ought to be saving a bit."

"Of course!" she said. "Why, Jimmy—of course! Dear—it's just that I didn't think——"

But after a few days it seemed that she had stopped thinking. Indeed, she wasn't consciously extravagant; it was just that, for her, it was sheer instinct, now, to step toward a waiting cab; to want expensive, scarce things, that were out of season; to order without thought or care. And Jimmy, watching her, tight-lipped, hated himself for the thoughts that came into his mind. Yet they came; he couldn't build a barrier high enough to keep them out forever. He had to face the truth. If just being engaged, just going about with Peggy, took all that was left over after his own modest living was paid for, what would it

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be when it was his high privilege to care for her entirely, feed her, lodge her, clothe her?

Never, not for the most fleeting of moments, did he blame her. Even had he not loved her so that his love was, at times, a thing that hurt him with a physical pain, he would have been too just for that. And it was because he could not blame her that there were times when it all seemed hopeless to him; when he felt that she must slip away from him, as the love of a dream slips away at the first touch of waking.

It was Jimmy who urged that Mrs. Harper should be told, Peggy who held back. She met his urging with clear eyes.

"I know—you're right, Jimmy, you're right," she said. "But—oh, my dear, if we are marking time, as you say, it's a time we want to mark, isn't it? A dear time—a time we'll look back to all our lives?"

He felt the shiver that ran through her.

"Mother," she said, "mother—you see, I know her, Jimmy. She's fond of you, of course — but — and — but—oh, she thinks I ought to love some man with heaps and heaps of money! She won't—oh, Jimmy—you know! She won't be awful—like some mother in a play—but she'll be difficult—and still——"

Two or three days later she telephoned to him, abruptly, just as he was about to leave the office. "You're to come to dinner to-night, Jimmy," she said. "Something has happened, so that we're not going out, after all."

"Ah!" said Jimmy. "And I thought I wasn't going to see you to-night——"

"Yes," she said, almost absently. "Jimmy! I'm going to let you have your way. I'm going to tell her — to-night——"

Jimmy was eager and reluctant as he made his way to her that evening. He was tremendously excited, but he was incredibly nervous, and bashful, too. And then he had to wait. In a few moments Mr. Harper came in, greeting Jimmy with that strange, diffident manner that was so appealing in a man of his age and rank. Jimmy wanted to talk; his chatter broke upon the rock of Mr. Harper's passive acquiescence. Peggy and her mother were long in coming; Jimmy, talked out, saw suddenly how tired Mr. Harper looked. He was moved to compassion.

"You don't look well, sir!" he blurted out. "I should think you'd take a rest——"

"I do, in the summer, Jimmy," said Mr. Harper, gently. "But my nose is at the grindstone pretty steadily." He sighed, profoundly. "All this," he said, with a vague gesture, "—New York—it keeps one in the treadmill, once one enters."

Jimmy stared at Peggy's father. It shot through his mind, somehow, that it was not always that he thought of Mr. Harper so, as Peggy's father. He found himself uncomfortable, groping for words.

"I was talking politics with a man to-day, sir," he said. "And I found myself thinking of you—wondering why you had never gone on the bench. There's something wrong when a man like you isn't made a judge."

Mr. Harper's tired smile was unchanged as he looked at Jimmy. "I had the offer of a place on the Federal bench, some years ago, Jimmy," he said. "And there was a strong intimation that ultimately I should reach the Supreme Court. And once, in

THE EYES OF A MAN WHO IS ALWAYS TIRED.

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a year when it would have meant a certain election, I was asked to run for the Supreme Court here, on a Fusion ticket. I—well, I couldn't afford to accept it, either time."

Jimmy stared at Peggy's father in a shocked silence, utterly bereft of words. And just then Peggy came running in, and even before she turned to Jimmy, though not before she shot a look at him in which triumph and love were mingled, she went to her father and kissed him. Behind her came Mrs. Harper, holding herself very straight, looking wonderful, no less, in a black gown all shot with silver, with diamonds blazing at her throat. She smiled faintly as Jimmy greeted her; there was something in her manner that made Jimmy know that Peggy had indeed told her.

But not until after the dinner that both he and Peggy ate in a wild, unsuppressed excitement, was anything said. Then Peggy drove him before her into the library, to which, as was his custom when he dined at home alone, Mr. Harper had retired for his solitary cigar.

Mrs. Harper came in after them, smiling still. And Peggy stood by Jimmy, her hand seeking his, and coming to rest at last in its firm grip. Mr. Harper looked up and saw them. His eyes left them for a moment, and fell upon his wife. And then, suddenly, all the weariness went from him, and he half rose from his chair, his eyes on Jimmy, his lips parting in a smile that made Jimmy choke and feel as he had that day when his chief had told him that he had made good.

"John—Peggy—these children—" said Mrs. Harper. "Peggy wants to go away with Jimmy——"

And then Jimmy was left standing alone, flushing, dreadfully self-conscious, while Peggy ran to her father, and clung to him, laughing and sobbing in turn, and he patted her shoulders and her head gently.

"I supposed so," said Mr. Harper, at last. He looked again at Jimmy. "I'm not sorry." He said that almost with defiance, as he looked at his wife standing stiff and straight and looking at them with faintly parted lips, and a tolerant amusement in her eyes.

"I won't say that I'm sorry," said Mrs. Harper. "Jimmy's a dear boy. But—well, we needn't be afraid of facts, need we? Jimmy—Peggy's told me that you have five thousand a year—and excellent prospects."

"I've a little besides my salary," said Jimmy, looking eagerly at Mr. Harper. "I've had a chance to buy in stock. That means another thousand—more, later——"

"Well," said Mrs. Harper, flatly. "There it is."

And somehow, with those four words, she was able to make Jimmy's pride in that extra thousand a year look ridiculous. Jimmy squared his shoulders as he looked from her to Peggy's father, and then, swiftly, to Peggy herself. He didn't speak at once, but his face grew hard, and his eyes were very bright.

"I think that's quite a lot," said Peggy, nervously. "You see, there'll be just Jimmy and me. It'll be plenty—won't it? Mother? Dad?"

Mrs. Harper smiled curiously. She wouldn't look at Peggy; her eyes were fixed on her husband. And under her gaze Mr. Harper moved uncomfortably.

"We'd better have this out," said Jimmy, abruptly, just as it seemed that Mr. Harper was about to say something. "It is plenty, Peggy. It's—well, it's got to be plenty. And it will be for what we ought to want and ought to have. It wouldn't go very far if you tried to go on living as you've been living all your life. It means that you'll have an allowance for your clothes, and that you'll have to wear what you can have—not just what you like. And it means starting with one maid, and stopping to think before you have things charged, or call a taxi. It means a little house, somewhere in the suburbs—oh, you know—I've told you——"

"Nonsense!" said Mrs. Harper, crisply, and yet tolerantly. "It sounds splendid, Jimmy. And I suppose it ought to be possible. But it isn't. We'll have to help, of course. Peggy's allowance shall go on, so that you needn't think about her clothes. And then, when special things come up—I'm a little sorry. But, after all, we want Peggy to be happy. And it seems that she's got to have you for that. So——"

She stopped, and again she looked at her husband. He sighed, faintly. For a moment the mask that hid the weariness in his eyes was off. He nodded.

"Yes," he said, gently. "That's the way we'll fix it——"

"But—!" cried Peggy, her voice trembling. She looked at Jimmy, and there were tears in her eyes. "But—oh, that's

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not what we've meant, Jimmy and I! Is it, Jimmy?"

He shook his head vehemently.

"We—I—why—I *want* to get along on what Jimmy has!" she said.

"And she's got to do just that!" said Jimmy. All his awe of Mrs. Harper had gone; he wasn't a bit afraid of her any more. "If she's going to marry me she's got to marry me really. I can't take her as a gift—I won't!"

He turned toward Peggy suddenly. "Something like this was coming, anyhow, Peggy," he said. "I was going to have a showdown. I meant to sit down, tonight, and try to think things out, so that we could talk. Remember how we talked things over before? About taxis and ordering expensive things, and all the rest of it?"

"Yes!" said Peggy. "And, Jimmy—I did try—I've been meaning to try harder ——"

"Oh, it's been my fault as much as yours!" he said. "I wanted you to have all the things you wanted and were used to having. But I'd made up my mind that we'd have to draw the line. And I meant to try to think out some way to make you understand that I wasn't mean or stingy, but just—right. And now—well, it seems to me that this is what we've got to do: Every week, I'm going to put aside so much that must be saved, and then we'll spend what's left over, after I've paid for my rooms and the things I've got to have, on having a good time together. Sometimes I suppose we'll spend most of it on Monday night on one party—and if we do we'll go to the movies the rest of the week, and stop at the drug-store for sodas on the way home! You see, if we get used to doing things that way it won't be so hard after we're married——"

"Why—of course," cried Peggy. "It's the very thing we ought to do, Jimmy! I'll get used to stopping to think about spending! I've never done that. I've tried—I really have tried. But——"

"I'LL PHONE FOR A TAXI, AND WE'LL MISS THE FIRST ACT OF SOME SHOW."

"Peggy!" said Mrs. Harper. "My dear—you and Jimmy are going very fast! We've wanted you to have everything you wanted. We've never wanted you to have to stop and think, as Jimmy says——"

"That's just it, Mrs. Harper," said Jimmy, smiling. "You've made it pretty hard for me, you know! Peggy can send

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me away, of course. But I'm not going to have a wife whose father has to help me support her!"

"Send you away!" said Peggy, furiously. "I—why—I won't! Jimmy—it's you I want; it's you I wanted all the time, not taxicabs and clothes and asp—asparagus and things that don't matter a little bit!"

"Ah!" said Jimmy, immeasurably content. He smiled triumphantly as he looked at Mrs. Harper.

"Peggy!" Mrs. Harper again, sharply. "All this is ridiculous—and in very poor taste——"

"Be still!" said Mr. Harper, suddenly.

He stood up and, somehow, he had lost that faint stoop of the shoulders. It seemed to have vanished, together with the deprecatory tone in his voice. "Peggy's made her choice, thank God! And I believe she's got the character to stick to it! I never thought she had so much sense! And she'll have to stick to it. I'll see to that. Her allowance sha'n't go on. I've got something to say about that."

"John!" said Mrs. Harper, staring at him, aghast. "Why—John——"

In her eyes, in her voice, was the reflection of a doubt of her power such as she had not known for years in her dealings with him.

"I've got something to say about a good many things!" Mr. Harper continued, with a growing assurance. "I have had, all the time—I didn't say it, that's all! And now I'm going to. I want this wedding hurried up! I'm tired. I want to get away from all this fuss and bustle here in town."

He turned upon Jimmy and Peggy, who had drawn close to one another.

"Get out, you two!" he said, with mock ferocity. "I want to smoke my cigar—and talk to my wife—and plan my vacation——"

Jimmy laughed happily, as he took Peggy's arm. And Peggy, wondering, lacking as yet Jimmy's perfect understanding, was still somehow deeply content; and she, too, laughed as she saw her mother's amazement. For a moment she broke away from Jimmy and clung to her father. And then, looking backward as she went, she let Jimmy draw her toward the door.

They went out together, and Peggy was very sober suddenly. Jimmy cried out, remorsefully, as he saw the tears that welled up in her eyes.

"It's dad, Jimmy," she said. "Poor old dad—I've never thought about him that way, somehow——"

"It's all right, dear," said Jimmy, awkwardly. He didn't know how to comfort her. But finally he did have an inspiration, of a sort. "Listen, Peggy," he said. "It's not so awfully late. And we're not supposed to start this new budget scheme until tomorrow. I'll phone for a taxi, and we'll miss the first act of some show——"

"Oh, Jimmy!" Peggy cried, and sprang away from him. Her laugh rang out mischievous, delighted. "No—no! You wait! I'll change into a thick dress—I'll be quick. And then we'll climb on top of a 'bus and ride down to the Square and back. Only forty cents that'll cost, Jimmy—and it's one of those heavenly cold nights, with millions of stars to watch, and——"

She danced away as he tried to catch her in his arms. In the door she stood a moment, mocking him, and blew him a kiss. "Spendthrift!" she scoffed—and was gone.

There's a story coming in May that deserves all the adjectives like "tense" and "breathless" and "thrilling" that the language affords. It's a story of adventure on the Great Lakes, centering about the heroism of a young Scandinavian sailor. It's by Harold Titus, who wrote "Listmann's Jess and the Gentle Hand." Don't overlook the story of "Lars."

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THE HOSTS OF APRIL

BY CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

Decoration by FRANKLIN BOOTH

Behold young April's banners
  Upon the boughs of spring!
In every glade and marshland
  Green flags are shimmering.
The great blue armies of the Lord
  Thunder, and stir, and sing!

In yellow, bright battalions
  The hosts of April come;
There is a sounding chorus,
  The faint tap of a drum,
And in the woods' deep bivouac
  A strange delirium.

Now every shy earth creature
  Advances in the dawn,
For the black ranks of winter
  Have suddenly withdrawn;
A glory marches through the world
  And camps upon my lawn.

I hear the pipers playing
  Upon their golden flutes;
Hark to the martial music
  Of all the forest lutes!
A myriad cymbals crash and beat,
  And the glad world salutes.

Behind the flowery victors,
  Close in their royal train,
I see another army
  Sweep over hill and plain—
It is a purple regiment
  With slanting swords of rain.

O passionate invasion,
  Desired, long-dreamed-of time!
Rush through our hearts with rapture,
  Erase Life's dust and grime;
For now the heavens have bent to earth
  In the year's silver prime.

There never moved an army
  With such a lordly swing;
The waiting earth is jubilant
  At such sweet conquering.
Victoriously come once more
  The valiant hosts of spring!

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LONG LIVE THE KING!

by Mary Roberts Rinehart

AFFAIRS at the Court of Livonia are not happy. The King, old and frail, has not more than a year to live. The heir apparent, Prince Ferdinand William Otto, is a boy of ten. There are stirrings of revolution all through the kingdom. A secret Terrorist society, which had assassinated Otto's father, has reorganized and grown powerful. So when one afternoon Otto runs away from an opera that bores him, the palace is, naturally, in a panic. Otto meanwhile has a glorious time. He meets an American boy, Bobby Thorpe, whose father is manager of a scenic railway in the park, and to Otto's wild delight Bobby takes him for a ride. It is not till eight o'clock that the Crown Prince, very dirty and disheveled, returns to the palace. That night the King and his Chancellor, Mettlich, confer over the boy's danger, and end by appointing Lieutenant Nicholas Larisch to have constant charge of him. This arrangement appeals to Otto, who adores "Nikky" and also to Otto's cousin Hedwig, next in line after Otto, who is inclined to adore "Nikky" herself. But other plans are being made for Hedwig. Mettlich has convinced the King that the safety of the country demands an alliance between Livonia and her neighbor Karnia: Hedwig must marry Karl, King of Karnia, whom she loathes. The Chancellor unfolds this plan to Hedwig's mother, the Archduchess Annunciata, and wins her grudging consent. That same afternoon she comes upon Hedwig and "Nikky" in the nursery, amusing Otto. She makes scenes, and after Hedwig is gone, she tells "Nikky" of the marriage plan and pledges him to loyalty. It is not until evening that Hedwig herself is told. Meantime the Countess Loschek, lady in waiting to Annunciata, and spy in King Karl's service, has heard; and, loving Karl herself, she resolves to prevent the marriage. Stealthily she prepares a code letter giving King Karl full data about Livonia's army and equipment, and slips it out to a messenger. But she is seen by a member of the Terrorists, and that night her messenger is attacked, and while he is unconscious a blank letter is substituted. "Nikky" happens to get in on the fight, and helps the wounded messenger home. Later, from the Cathedral steps, he sees this same man pass his letter to a confederate in a car. "Nikky" hides in the car, and after it has crossed into Karnia, overpowers the driver, gets the letter, and forces the man to reveal its destination.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Two Prisoners

HERMAN SPIER had made his escape with the letter. He ran through tortuous byways of the old city, under arches into courtyards, out again by doorways set in walls, twisted, doubled like a rabbit. And all this with no pursuit, save the pricking one of terror.

But at last he halted, looked about,

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THE CROWN PRINCE SAW BOBBY AS HE WAS STANDING ON A BENCH, PEERING OVER THE SHOULDERS OF THE CROWD.

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR E. BECHER

perceived that only his own guilty conscience accused him, and took breath. He made his way to the house in the Road of the Good Children, the letter now buttoned inside his coat, and, finding the doors closed, lurked in the shadow of the park until, an hour later, Black Humbert himself appeared.

He eyed his creature with cold anger. "It is a marvel," he sneered, "that such flight as yours has not brought the police in a pack at your heels."

"I had the letter," Herman replied sulkily. "It was necessary to save it."

"You were to see where Niburg took the substitute."

But here Herman was the one to sneer. "Niburg!" he said. "You know well enough that he will take no substitute to-night, or any night. You strike hard, my friend."

The concierge growled, and together they entered the house across the street.

In the absence of Humbert, his niece, daughter of a milk-seller near, kept the bureau, answered the bell, and after nine o'clock, when the doors were bolted, admitted the various occupants of the house and gave them the tiny tapers with which to light themselves up-stairs. She was sewing and singing softly when they entered. Herman Spier's pale face colored. He suspected the girl of a softness for him, not entirely borne out by the facts. So he straightened his ready-made tie, which hooked to his collar button, and ogled her.

"All right, girl. You may go," said Humbert. His huge bulk seemed to fill the little room.

"Good night to you both," the girl said, and gave Herman Spier a nod. When she

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was gone, the concierge locked the door behind her.

"And now," he said, "for a look at the treasure."

He rubbed his hands together as Herman produced the letter. Heads close, they examined it under the lamp. Then they glanced at each other.

"A cipher," said the concierge, shortly. "It tells nothing."

It was a moment of intense disappointment. In Humbert's mind had been forming, for the past hour or two, a plan—nothing less than to go himself before the Council and, with the letter in hand, to point out certain things which would be valuable. In this way he would serve both the party and himself. Preferment would follow. He could demand, under the coming republic, some high office. Already, of course, he was known to the Committee, and known well, but rather for brawn than brain. They used him. Now——

"Code!" he said. And struck the paper with a hairy fist. "Everything goes wrong. That blonde devil interferes, and now this letter speaks but of blankets and loaves!"

The bell rang, and, taking care to thrust the letter out of sight, the concierge disappeared. Then ensued, in the hall, a short colloquy, followed by a thumping on the staircase. The concierge returned.

"Old Adelbert, from the Opera," he said. "He has lost his position, and would have spent the night airing his grievance. But I sent him off!"

Herman turned his pale eyes toward the giant. "So!" he said. And after a pause, "He has some influence among the veterans."

"And is Royalist to his marrow," sneered the concierge. He took the letter out again and, bringing a lamp, went over it carefully. It was signed merely "Olga." "Blankets and loaves!" he fumed.

Now, as between the two, Black Humbert furnished evil and strength, but it was the pallid clerk who furnished the cunning. And now he made a suggestion.

"It is possible," he said, "that *he*—upstairs—could help."

"Adelbert? Are you mad?"

"The other. He knows codes. It was by means of one we caught him. I have heard that all these things have one basis, and a simple one."

The concierge considered. Then he rose. "It is worth trying," he observed.

He thrust the letter in his pocket, and the two conspirators went out into the gloomy hall. There, on a ledge, lay the white tapers, and one he lighted, shielding it from the draft in the hollow of his great hand. Then he led the way to the top of the house.

Here were three rooms. One, the best, was Herman Spier's, a poor thing at that. Next to it was old Adelbert's. As they passed the door they could hear him within, muttering to himself. At the extreme end of the narrow corridor, in a passage almost blocked by old furniture, was another room, a sort of attic, with a slanting roof.

Making sure that old Adelbert did not hear them, they went back to this door, which the concierge unlocked. Inside the room was dark. The taper showed little. As their eyes became accustomed to the darkness, the outlines of the attic stood revealed, a junk-room, piled high with old trunks, and in one corner a bed.

Black Humbert taper in hand, approached the bed. Herman remained near the door. Now, with the candle near, the bed revealed a man lying on it, and tied with knotted ropes; a young man, with sunken cheeks and weary, desperate eyes. Beside him, on a chair, were the fragments of a meal, a bit of broken bread, some cold soup, on which grease had formed a firm coating.

Lying there, sleeping and waking and sleeping again, young Haeckel, one time of his Majesty's secret service and student in the University, had lost track of the days. He knew not how long he had been a prisoner, except that it had been eternities. Twice a day, morning and evening, came his jailer and loosened his bonds, brought food, of a sort, and allowed him, not out of mercy but because it was the Committee's pleasure that for a time he should live, to move about the room and bring the blood again to his numbed limbs.

He was to live because he knew many things which the Committee would know. But, as the concierge daily reminded him, there was a limit to mercy and to patience.

In the meantime they held him, a hostage against certain contingencies. Held him and kept him barely alive. Already he tottered about the room when his bonds were removed; but his eyes did not falter, nor his courage. Those whom he had

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served so well, he felt, would not forget him. And in the meantime, knowing what he knew, he would die before he became the tool of these workers in the dark.

So he lay and thought, and slept when thinking became unbearable, and thus went his days and the long nights.

The concierge untied him, and stood back. "Now," he said.

But the boy—he was no more—lay still. He made one effort to rise, and fell back.

turned to Herman Spier. "Go down," he said, "and bring up some brandy. He can do nothing for us in this state."

He drank the brandy eagerly when it came, and the concierge poured him a second quantity. What with weakness and slow starvation, it did what no threat of personal danger would have done. It broke down his resistance. Not immediately. He fought hard, when the matter was first broached to him. But in the end he took

"WHOEVER WAS TO RECEIVE THIS," HE SAID, "WOULD HAVE BEEN IN POSSESSION OF COMPLETE DATA OF THE ARMY, EQUIPMENT AND ALL."

"Up with you!" said the concierge, and jerked him to his feet. He caught the rail of the bed, or he would have fallen. "Now —stand like a man."

He stood then, facing his captors without defiance. He had worn all that out in the first days of his imprisonment. He was in shirt and trousers only, his feet bare, his face unshaven—the thin first beard of early manhood.

"Well?" he said at last. "I thought—you've been here once to-night."

"Right, my cuckoo. But to-night I do you double honor."

But seeing that Haeckel was swaying, he

the letter and, holding it close to the candle, he examined it closely. His hands shook, his eyes burned. The two Terrorists watched him narrowly.

Brandy or no brandy, however, he had not lost his wits. He glanced up suddenly. "Tell me something about this," he said. "And what will you do for me if I decode it?"

The concierge would promise anything, and did. Haeckel listened, and knew the offer of liberty was a lie. But there was something about the story of the letter itself that bore the hallmarks of truth.

"You see," finished Black Humbert

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cunningly, "she—this lady of the Court—is plotting with some one, or so we suspect. If it is only a *liaison*—!" He spread his hands. "If, as is possible, she betrays us to Karnia, that we should find out. It is not," he added, "among our plans that Karnia should know too much of us."

"Who is it?"

"I can not betray a lady," said Black Humbert, and leered.

The brandy was still working, but the spy's mind was clear. He asked for a pencil, and set to work. After all, if there was a spy of Karl's in the palace, it were well to know it. He tried complicated methods first, to find that the body of the letter, after all, was simple enough. By reading every tenth word, he got a consistent message, save that certain supplies, over which the concierge had railed, were special code words for certain regiments. These he could not decipher.

"Whoever was to receive this," he said at last, "would have been in possession of complete data of the army, equipment and all, and the location of various regiments. Probably you and your band of murderers have that already."

The concierge nodded, no whit ruffled. "And for whom was it intended?"

"I can not say. The address is fictitious, of course."

Black Humbert scowled. "So!" he said. "You tell us only a part!"

"There is nothing else to tell. Save, as I have written here, the writer ends, 'I must see you at once. Let me know where.'"

The brandy was getting in its work well by that time. He was feeling strong, his own man again, and reckless. But he was cunning, too. He yawned. "And in return for all this, what?" he demanded. "I have done you a service, friend cut-throat."

The concierge stuffed letter and translation into his pocket. "What would you have, short of liberty?"

"Air, for one thing." He stood up and stretched again. God, how strong he felt! "If you would open that accursed window for an hour—the place reeks."

Humbert was in high good humor in spite of his protests. In his pocket he held the key to favor, aye, to a plan which he meant to lay before the Committee of Ten, a plan breath-taking in its audacity and yet potential of success. He went to the window and put his great shoulder against it.

Instantly Haeckel overturned the candle and, picking up the chair, hurled it at Herman Spier. He heard the clerk go down as he leaped for the door. Herman had not locked it. He was in the passage before the concierge had stumbled past the bed.

On the stairs his lightness counted. His bare feet made no sound. He could hear behind him the great mass of Humbert, hurling itself down. Haeckel ran as he had never run before. The last flight now, with the concierge well behind, and liberty two seconds away.

He flung himself against the doors to the street. But they were fastened by a chain, and the key was not in the lock.

He crumpled up in a heap as the concierge fell on him with fists like flails.

Some time later, old Adelbert heard a sound in the corridor, and peered out. Humbert, assisted by the lodger, Spier, was carrying to the attic what appeared to be an old mattress, rolled up and covered with rags. In the morning, outside the door, there was a darkish stain, however, which might have been blood.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

In the Park

AT NINE o'clock the next morning the Chancellor visited the Crown Prince. He came without ceremony. Lately he had been coming often. He liked to come in quietly, and sit for an hour in the schoolroom, saying nothing. Prince Ferdinand William Otto found these occasions rather trying.

"I should think," he protested once to his governess, "that he would have something else to do. He's the Chancellor, isn't he?"

But on this occasion the Chancellor had an errand, the product of careful thought. Early as it was, already he had read his morning mail in his study, had dictated his replies, had eaten a frugal breakfast of fruit and sausage, and in the small inner room which had heard so many secrets, had listened to the reports of his agents, and of the King's physicians. Neither had been reassuring.

The King had passed a bad night, and Haeckel was still missing. The Chancellor's heart was heavy.

The Chancellor watched the Crown Prince, as he sat at the high desk, laboriously writing. It was the hour of English

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composition, and Prince Ferdinand William Otto was writing a theme.

"About dogs," he explained. "I've seen a great many, you know. I could do it better with a pencil. My pen sticks in the paper."

He wrote on, and Mettlich sat and watched. From the boy his gaze wandered over the room. He knew it well. Not so many years ago he had visited in this very room another bright-haired lad, whose pen had also stuck in the paper. The Chancellor looked up at the crossed swords, and something like a mist came into his keen old eyes.

He caught Miss Braithwaite's glance, and he knew what was in her mind. For nine years now had come, once a year, the painful anniversary of the death of the late Crown Prince and his young wife. For nine years had the city mourned, with flags at half-mast and the bronze statue of the old queen draped in black. And for nine years had the day of grief passed unnoticed by the lad on whom hung the destinies of the kingdom.

Now they confronted a new situation. The next day but one was the anniversary again. The boy was older, and observant. It would not be possible to conceal from him the significance of the procession marching through the streets with muffled drums. Even the previous year he had demanded the reason for crêpe on his grandmother's statue, and had been put off, at the cost of Miss Braithwaite's strong feeling for the truth. Also he had not been allowed to see the morning paper, which was, on these anniversaries, bordered with black. This had annoyed him. The Crown Prince always read the morning paper—especially the weather forecast.

They could not continue to lie to the boy. Truthfulness had been one of the rules of his rigorous upbringing. And he was now of an age to remember. So the Chancellor sat and waited, and fingered his heavy watch-chain.

Suddenly the Crown Prince looked up. "Have you ever been on a scenic railway?" he inquired politely.

The Chancellor regretted that he had not.

"It's very remarkable," said Prince Ferdinand William Otto. "But unless you like excitement, perhaps you would not care for it."

The Chancellor observed that he had had his share of excitement, in his time, and was now for the ways of quiet.

Prince Ferdinand William Otto had a great many things to say, but thought better of it. Miss Braithwaite disliked Americans, for instance, and it was quite possible that the Chancellor did also. It seemed strange about Americans. Either one liked them a great deal, or not at all. He put his attention to the theme, and finished it. Then, flushed with authorship, he looked up. "May I read you the last line of it?" he demanded of the Chancellor.

"I shall be honored, Highness." Not often did the Chancellor say "Highness." Generally he said "Otto" or "my child."

Prince Ferdinand William Otto read aloud, with dancing eyes, his last line: "'I should like to own a dog.' I thought," he said wistfully, "that I might ask my grandfather for one."

"I see no reason why you should not have a dog," the Chancellor observed.

"Not one to be kept at the stables," Otto explained. "One to stay with me all the time. One to sleep on the foot of the bed."

But here the Chancellor threw up his hands. Instantly he visualized all the objections to dogs, from fleas to rabies. And he put the difficulties into words. No mean speaker was the Chancellor when so minded. He was a master of style, of arrangement, of logic and reasoning. He spoke at length, even, at the end, rising and pacing a few steps up and down the room. But when he had concluded, when the dog, so to speak, had fled yelping to the country of dead hopes, Prince Ferdinand William Otto merely gulped, and said:

"Well, I wish I could have a dog!"

The Chancellor changed his tactics by changing the subject. "I was wondering this morning, as I crossed the park, if you would enjoy an excursion soon. Could it be managed, Miss Braithwaite?"

"I dare say," said Miss Braithwaite dryly. "Although I must say, if there is no improvement in punctuation and capital letters——"

"What sort of excursion?" asked his Royal Highness, guardedly. He did not care for picture galleries.

"Out of doors, to see something interesting."

But Prince Ferdinand William Otto was cautious with the caution of one who, by

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hoping little, may be agreeably disappointed. "A corner-stone, I suppose," he said.

"Not a corner-stone," said the Chancellor, with eyes that began to twinkle under ferocious brows. "No, Otto. A real excursion, up the river."

"To the fort? I do want to see the new fort."

As a matter of truth, the Chancellor had not thought of the fort. But like many another before him, he accepted the suggestion and made it his own. "To the fort, of course," said he.

"And take luncheon along, and eat it there, and have Hedwig and Nikky? And see the guns?"

But this was going too fast. Nikky, of course, would go, and if the Princess cared to, she too. But luncheon! It was necessary to remind the Crown Prince that the officers at the fort would expect to have him join their mess. There was a short parley over this, and it was finally settled that the officers should serve luncheon, but that there should be no speeches. The Crown Prince had already learned that his presence was a sort of rod of Aaron, to unloose floods of speeches. Through what outpourings of oratory he had sat or stood, in his almost ten years!

"Then that's settled," he said at last. "I'm very happy. This morning I shall apologize to M. Puaux."

During the remainder of the morning the Crown Prince made various excursions to the window to see if the weather was holding good. Also he asked, during his half-hour's intermission, for the great box of lead soldiers that was locked away in the cabinet. "I shall pretend that the desk is a fort, Miss Braithwaite," he said. "Do you mind being the enemy, and pretending to be shot now and then?"

But Miss Braithwaite was correcting papers. She was willing to be a passive enemy and be potted at, but she drew the line at falling over. Prince Ferdinand William Otto did not persist. He was far too polite. But he wished in all his soul that Nikky would come. Nikky, he felt, would die often and hard.

But Nikky did not come.

Came German and French, mathematics and music—and no Nikky. Came at last the riding-hour—and still no Nikky.

At twelve o'clock, Prince Ferdinand William Otto, clad in his riding-garments of tweed knickers, puttees, and a belted jacket, stood by the schoolroom window and looked out. The inner windows of his suite faced the courtyard, but the schoolroom opened over the Place—a bad arrangement surely, seeing what distractions to lessons may take place in a public square, what pigeons feeding in the sun, what bands with drums and drum-majors, what children flying kites.

"I don't understand it," the Crown Prince said plaintively. "He is generally very punctual. Perhaps——"

But he loyally refused to finish the sentence. The "perhaps" was a grievous thought, nothing less than that Nikky and Hedwig were at that moment riding in the ring together, and had both forgotten him. He was rather used to being forgotten. With the exception of Miss Braithwaite, he was nobody's business, really. His aunt forgot him frequently. On Wednesdays it was his privilege—or not, as you think of it—to take luncheon with the Archduchess; and once in so often she would forget and go out. Or be in, and not expecting him, which was as bad.

"Bless us, I forgot the child," she would say on these occasions.

But until now, Nikky had never forgotten. He had been the soul of remembering, indeed, and rather more than punctual. Prince Ferdinand William Otto consulted his watch. It was of gold, and on the inside was engraved:

"To Ferdinand William Otto from his grandfather, on the occasion of his taking his first communion."

"It's getting rather late," he observed.

Miss Braithwaite looked troubled. "No doubt something has detained him," she said, with unusual gentleness. "You might work at the frame for your cousin Hedwig. Then, if Captain Larisch comes, you can still have a part of your lesson."

Prince Ferdinand William Otto brightened. The burnt-wood photograph frame for Hedwig was his delight. And yesterday, as a punishment for the escapade of the day before, it had been put away with an alarming air of finality. He had traced the design himself, from a Christmas card, and it had originally consisted of a ring and small Cupids, alternating with hearts. He liked it very much. The Cupids were engagingly fat. However, Miss Braithwaite had not approved of their state of nature, and it had

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been necessary to drape them with sashes tied in neat bows.

The pyrography outfit was produced, and for fifteen minutes Prince Ferdinand William Otto labored, his head on one side, his royal tongue slightly protruded. But, above the thin blue smoke of burning, his face remained wistful. He was afraid, terribly afraid, that he had been forgotten again.

"I hope Nikky is not ill," he said once. "He smokes a great many cigarets. He says he knows they are bad for him."

"Certainly they are bad for him," said Miss Braithwaite. "They contain nicotine, which is a violent poison. A drop of nicotine on the tongue of a dog will kill it."

The reference was unfortunate.

"I wish I might have a dog," observed Prince Ferdinand William Otto.

Fortunately, at that moment, Hedwig came in. She came in a trifle defiantly, although that passed unnoticed, and she also came unannounced, as was her cousinly privilege. And she stood inside the door and stared at the Prince. "Well!" she said.

"I CARE FOR SOME ONE ELSE," SAID HEDWIG, "AND I SHALL CARE FOR HIM ALL THE REST OF MY LIFE."

Prince Ferdinand William Otto was equal to the occasion. He hastily drew out his pocket-handkerchief and spread it over the frame. But his face was rather red. A palace is a most difficult place to have a secret in.

"Well?" she repeated, with a rising inflection. It was clear that she had not noticed the handkerchief incident. "Is there to be no riding-lesson to-day?"

"I don't know. Nikky has not come."

"Where is he?"

Here the drop of nicotine got in its deadly work. "I'm afraid he is ill," said Prince Ferdinand William Otto. "He said he smoked too many cigarets, and——"

"Is Captain Larisch ill?" Hedwig looked at the governess, and lost some of her bright color.

Miss Braithwaite did not know, and said so. "At the very least," she went on, "he should have sent some word. I do not know what things are coming to. Since his Majesty's illness, no one seems to have any responsibility, or to take any."

"But of course he would have sent word," said Hedwig, frowning. "I don't understand it. He has never been so late before, has he?"

"He has never been late at all," Prince Ferdinand William Otto spoke up quickly.

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After a time Hedwig went away, and the Crown Prince took off his riding-clothes. He ate a very small luncheon, swallowing mostly a glass of milk and a lump in his throat. And afterward he worked at the frame, for an hour, shading the hearts carefully. At three o'clock he went for his drive.

There were two variations to the daily drive: One day they went up the river—almost as far as the monastery; the next day they went through the park. There was always an excitement about the park drive, because the people who spied the gold-wheeled carriage always came as close as possible, to see if it was really the Crown Prince. And when, as sometimes happened, it was only Hedwig, or Hilda, and Ferdinand William Otto had been kept at home by a cold, they always looked disappointed.

This was the park day. The horses moved sedately. Beppo looked severe and haughty. A strange man, in the place of Hans, beside Beppo, watched the crowd with keen and vigilant eyes. On the box between them, under his hand, the new footman had placed a revolver. Beppo sat as far away from it as he dared. The crowd lined up, and smiled and cheered. And Prince Ferdinand William Otto sat very straight, and bowed right and left, smiling.

Old Adelbert, limping across the park to the Opera, paused and looked. Then he shook his head. The country was indeed come to a strange pass, with only that boy and the feeble old King to stand between it and the things of which men whispered behind their hands. He went on, with his head down. A strange pass indeed, with revolution abroad in quiet places, and a cabal among the governors of the Opera to sell the opera-glass privilege to the highest bidder.

He went on, full of trouble.

Olga, the wardrobe woman, was also on her way to the Opera, which faced the park. She also saw the carriage, and at first her eyes twinkled. It was he, of course. The daring of him! But, as the carriage drew nearer, she bent forward. He looked pale, and there was a wistful droop to his mouth. "They have punished him for the little prank," she muttered. "That tight-faced Englishwoman, of course. The English are a hard race." She, too, went on.

As they drew near the end of the park, where the "Land of Delight" towered, Prince Ferdinand William Otto searched it with eager eyes. How wonderful it was! How steep and high, and alluring! He glanced sideways at Miss Braithwaite, but it was clear that to her it was only a monstrous heap of sheet-iron and steel, adorned with dejected greenery that had manifestly been out too soon in the chill air of very early spring.

A wonderful possibility presented itself. "If I see Bobby," he asked, "may I stop the carriage and speak to him?"

"Certainly not."

"Well, may I call to him?"

"Think it over," suggested Miss Braithwaite. "Would your grandfather like to know that you had done anything so undignified?"

He turned to her a rather desperate pair of eyes. "But I could explain to him," he said. "I was in such a hurry when I left, that I'm afraid I forgot to thank him. I ought to thank him, really. He was very polite to me."

Miss Braithwaite sat still in her seat and said nothing. The novelty of riding in a royal carriage had long since passed away, but she was aware that her position was most unusual. Not often did a governess, even of good family, as she was, ride daily in the park with a Crown Prince. In a way, on these occasions, she was more royal than royalty. She had, now and then, an inclination to bow right and left herself. And she guarded the dignity of these occasions with a watchful eye. So she said nothing just then. But later on something occurred to her. "You must remember, Otto," she said, "that this—this American child dislikes kings, and our sort of government." Shades of Mr. Gladstone—*our* sort of government! "It is possible, isn't it, that he would resent your being of the ruling family? Why not let things be as they are?"

"We were very friendly," said Ferdinand William Otto in a small voice. "I don't think it would make any difference."

But the seed was sown in the fertile ground of his young mind, to bear quick fruit.

It was the Crown Prince who saw Bobby first. He was standing on a bench, peering over the shoulders of the crowd. Prince Ferdinand William Otto saw him, and bent

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forward. "There he is!" he said, in a tense tone. "There on the——"

"Sit up straight," commanded Miss Braithwaite.

"May I just wave once? I——"

"Otto!" said Miss Braithwaite, in a terrible voice.

But a dreadful thing was happening. Bobby was looking directly at him, and making no sign. His mouth was a trifle open, but that was all. Otto had a momentary glimpse of him, of the small cap set far back, of the white sweater, of two coolly critical eyes. Then the crowd closed up, and the carriage moved on.

Prince Ferdinand William Otto sat back in his seat, very pale. Clearly Bobby was through with him. First Nikky had forgotten him, and now the American boy had learned his unfortunate position as one of the detested order, and would have none of him.

"You see," said Miss Braithwaite, with an air of relief, "he did not know you."

Up on the box the man beside Beppo kept his hand on the revolver. The carriage turned back toward the palace.

LATE that afternoon the Chancellor had a visitor. Old Mathilde, his servant and housekeeper, showed some curiosity but little excitement over it. She was, in fact, faintly resentful. The Chancellor had eaten little all day, and now, when she had an omelet ready to turn smoking out of the pan, must come the Princess Hedwig on foot like the common people, and demand to see him.

Mathilde admitted her, and surveyed her uncompromisingly. Royalties were quite as much in her line as they were in the Crown Prince's.

"He is about to have supper, Highness."

"Please, Mathilde," begged Hedwig. "It is very important."

Mathilde sighed. "As your Highness wishes," she agreed, and went grumblingly back to the study overlooking the walled garden.

"You may bring his supper when it is ready," Hedwig called to her. Mathilde was mollified, but she knew what was fitting, if the Princess did not. The omelet spoiled in the pan.

The Chancellor was in his old smoking-coat and slippers. He made an effort to don his tunic, but Hedwig, on Mathilde's heels, caught him in the act. And, after a glance at her face, he relinquished the idea, bowed over her hand, and drew up a chair for her.

And that was how the Chancellor of the kingdom learned that Captain Larisch, *aide-de-camp* to his Royal Highness, the Crown Prince, had disappeared.

"I am afraid it is serious," she said, watching him with wide, terrified eyes. "I know more than you think I do. I—we hear things, even in the palace." Irony here, but unconscious. "I know that there is trouble. And it is not like Captain Larisch to desert his post."

"A boyish escapade, Highness," said the Chancellor. But, in the twilight, he gripped hard at the arms of his chair. "He will turn up, very much ashamed of himself, to-night or to-morrow."

"That is what you want to believe. You know better."

He leaned back in his chair and considered her from under his heavy brows. So this was how things were; another, and an unlooked-for complication. Outside he could hear Mathilde's heavy footstep as she waited impatently for the Princess to go. The odor of a fresh omelet filled the little house. Nikky gone, perhaps to join the others who, one by one, had felt the steel of the Terrorists. And this girl, on whom so much hung, sitting there, a figure of young tragedy.

"Highness," he said at last, "if the worst has happened—and that I do not believe—it will be because there is trouble, as you have said. Sooner or later, we who love our country must make sacrifices for it. Most of all, those in high places will be called upon. And among them you may be asked to help."

"I? What can *I* do?" But she knew, and the Chancellor saw that she knew.

"It *is* Karl, then?"

"It *may* be King Karl, Hedwig."

Hedwig rose, and the Chancellor got heavily to his feet. She was fighting for calmness, and she succeeded very well. After all, if Nikky were gone, what did it matter? Only——

"There are so many of you," she said, rather pitifully, "And you are all so powerful. And against you there is only—me."

"Why against us, Highness?"

"Because," said Hedwig, "because I care for some one else, and I shall care for him all

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the rest of my life, even if he never comes back. You may marry me to whom you please, but I shall go on caring. I shall never forget. And I shall make Karl the worst wife in the world, because I hate him."

She opened the door and went out without ceremony, because she was hard driven and on the edge of tears. In the corridor she almost ran over the irritated Mathilde, and she wept all the way back to the palace, much to the dismay of her lady-in-waiting, who had disapproved of the excursion anyhow.

That night the city was searched for Nikky Larisch, but without result.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Nikky Does a Reckless Thing

NIKKY LARISCH had been having an exciting time.

First of all, he exchanged garments with the chauffeur, and cursed his own long legs, which proved difficult to cover adequately. But the chauffeur's long fur ulster helped considerably. The exchange was rather a ticklish matter, and would have been more so had he not found a revolver in the fur coat pocket. It is always hard to remove a coat from a man whose arms are tied, and trousers are even more difficult. To remove trousers from a refractory prisoner offers problems. They must be dragged off, and a good thrust from a heavy boot, or two boots, has been known to change the fate of nations.

However, Nikky's luck stood. His prisoner kicked, but owing to Nikky's wise precaution of having straddled him, nothing untoward happened.

Behold then, Nikky of the brave heart standing over his prostrate prisoner, and rolling him, mummy fashion, in his own tunic and a rug from the machine.

"It is cold, my friend," he said briefly. "But I am a kindly soul, and if you have told me the truth, you will not have so much as a snuffle to remind you of this to-morrow."

"I have told the truth."

"As a soldier, of course," Nikky went on, "I think you have made a mistake. You should have chosen the precipice. But as a private gentleman, I thank you."

Having examined the knots in the rope, which were very well done indeed, and having gagged the chauffeur securely, Nikky prepared to go. In his goggles, with the low-visored cap and fur coat, he looked not unlike his late companion. But he had a jaunty step as he walked toward the car, a bit of swagger that covered, perhaps, just a trifle of uneasiness.

For Nikky now knew his destination, knew that he was bound on perilous work, and that the chances of his returning were about fifty-fifty, or rather less.

Nevertheless, he was apparently quite calm as he examined the car. He would have chosen, perhaps, a less perilous place to attempt its mysteries, but needs must. He climbed in, and released the brakes. Then, with great caution, and considerable noise, he worked it away from the brink of the chasm, and started off.

He did not know his way. Over the mountains it was plain enough, for there was but one road. After he descended into the plain of Karnia, however, it became difficult. Sign-posts were few and not explicit. But at last he found the railroad, which he knew well—that railroad without objective, save as it would serve to move troops toward the border. After that Nikky found it easier.

But, with his course assured, other difficulties presented themselves. To take the letter to those who would receive it was one thing. But to deliver it, with all that it might contain, was another. He was not brilliant, was Nikky. Only brave and simple of heart, and unversed in the ways of darkness.

If, now, he could open the letter and remove it, substituting—well, what could he substitute? There were cigaret papers in his pocket. Trust Nikky for that. But how to make the exchange?

Nikky pondered. To cut the side of the envelope presented itself. But it was not good enough. The best is none too good when one's life is at stake.

The engine was boiling hard, a dull roaring under the hood that threatened trouble. He drew up beside the road and took off the water-cap. Then he whistled. Why, of course! Had it not been done from time immemorial, this steaming of letters? He examined it. It bore no incriminating seal.

He held the envelope over the water-cap, and was boyishly pleased to feel the flap loosen. After all, things were easy enough if one used one's brains. He rather regretted using almost all of his cigaret papers, of course. He had, perhaps, never

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NIKKY'S RESISTANCE TO SEARCH, WITH THE REVOLVER SO CLOSE, WAS SHORT-LIVED.

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heard of the drop of nicotine on the tongue of a dog.

As for the letter itself, he put it, without even glancing at it, into his cap, under the lining. Then he sealed the envelope again and dried it against one of the lamps. It looked, he reflected, as good as new.

He was extremely pleased with himself.

Before he returned to the machine he consulted his watch. It was three o'clock. True, the long early spring night gave him four more hours of darkness. But the messenger was due at three, at the hunting-lodge in the mountains which was his destination. He would be, at the best, late by an hour.

He pushed the car to its limit. The fine hard road, with its border of trees, stretched ahead. Nikky surveyed it with a soldier's eye. A military road, or he knew nothing—one along which motor lorries could make express time. A marvelous road, in that sparsely settled place. Then he entered the forest, that kingly reserve in which Karl ran deer for pastime.

He was nearing his destination.

On what the messenger had told him Nikky hung his hope of success. This was, briefly, that he should go to the royal shooting-box at Wedeling, and should go, not to the house itself, but to the gate-keeper's lodge. Here he was to leave his machine, and tap at the door. On its being opened, he was to say nothing, but to give the letter to him who opened the door. After that he was to take the machine away to the capital, some sixty miles farther on.

The message, then, was to the King himself. For Nikky, as all the world, knew that Karl, with some kindred spirits, was at Wedeling, shooting. That is, if the messenger told the truth. Nikky intended to find out. He was nothing if not thorough.

Nikky had lost much of his jaunty air by that time. On the surface he was his usual debonair self, but his mouth was grim and rather contemptuous. This was Karl's way: to propose marriage with a Princess of Livonia, and yet line the country with his spies! Let him but return, God willing, with his report, and after that, let them continue negotiations with Karl if they dared.

When at last the lights of the lodge at the gate of Wedeling gleamed out through the trees, it was half-past three, and a wet spring snow was falling softly. In an open place Nikky looked up. The stars were gone.

The lodge now, and the gate-keeper's house. Nikky's heart hammered as he left the car—hammered with nervousness, not terror. But he went boldly to the door, and knocked.

So far all was well. There were footsteps within, and a man stepped out into the darkness, closing the door behind him. Nikky, who had come so far to see this very agent, and to take back a description of him, felt thwarted. Things were not being done, he felt, according to specification. And the man spoke, which was also unexpected.

"You have the letter?" he asked.

"It is here." Luckily he did not speak the *patois*.

"I will take it."

Nikky held it out. The man fumbled for it, took it.

"Orders have come," said the voice, "that you remain here for the night. In the morning you are to carry dispatches to the city."

Poor Nikky! With his car facing toward the lodge, and under necessity, in order to escape, to back it out into the highway! He thought quickly. There was no chance of overpowering his man quickly and silently. And the house was not empty. From beyond the door came the sounds of men's voices, and the thud of drinking-mugs on a bare table.

"You will take me up to the house, and then put the car away until morning."

Nikky breathed again. It was going to be easy, after all. If only the road went straight to the shooting-box itself, the rest was simple. But he prayed that he make no false turning, to betray his ignorance.

"Very well," he said.

His companion opened the door behind him. "Ready, now," he called. "The car is here."

Two men rose from a table where they had been sitting, and put on great coats of fur. The lamplight within quivered in the wind from the open door. Nikky was quite calm now. His heart beat its regular seventy-two, and he even reflected, with a sort of grim humor, that the Chancellor would find the recital of this escapade much to his taste. In a modest way Nikky felt that he was making history.

The man who had received the letter got into the machine beside him. The other

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two climbed into the tonneau. And, as if to make the *dénouement* doubly ridiculous, the road led straight. Nikky, growing extremely cheerful behind his goggles, wondered how much petrol remained in the car.

The men behind talked in low tones. Of the shooting, mostly, and the effect of the snow on it. They had been after pheasant that day, it appeared.

"They are late to-night," grumbled one of them, as the house appeared, full lighted. "A tardy start to-morrow again!"

"The King must have his sleep," commented the other, rather mockingly.

With a masterly sweep, Nikky drew up his machine before the entrance. Let them once alight, let him but start his car down the road again, and all the devils of the night might follow. He feared nothing.

But here again Nikky planned too fast. The servant who came out to open the doors of the motor had brought a message. "His Majesty desires that the messenger come in," was the bomb-shell which exploded in Nikky's ears.

Nikky hesitated. And then some imp of recklessness in him prompted him not to run away, but to see the thing through. It was, after all, a chance either way. These men beside the car were doubtless armed—one at least, nearest him, was certainly one of Karl's own secret agents. And, as Nikky paused, he was not certain, but it seemed to him that the man took a step toward him.

"Very well," said Nikky, grumbling. "But I have had a long ride, and a cold one. I need sleep."

Even then he had a faint hope that the others would precede him, and that it would be possible to leap back to the car, and escape. But, whether by accident or design, the group closed about him. Flight was out of the question.

A little high was Nikky's head as he went in. He had done a stupid thing now, and he knew it. He should have taken his letter and gone back with it. But, fool or not, he was a soldier. Danger made him calm.

So he kept his eyes open. The shooting-box was a simple one, built, after the fashion of the mountains, of logs, and wood-lined. The walls of the hall were hung with skins and the mounted heads of animals, boar and deer, and even an American mountain sheep, testifying to the range of its royal owner's activities as a hunter. Great pelts lay on the floor, and the candelabra were horns cunningly arranged to hold candles. The hall extended to the roof, and a gallery halfway up showed the doors of the sleeping apartments.

The lodge was noisy. Loud talking, the coming and going of servants with trays, the crackle of wood fires in which whole logs were burning, and, as Nikky and his escort entered, the roaring chorus of a hunting-song filled the ears.

Two of the men flung off their heavy coats, and proceeded without ceremony into the room whence the sounds issued. The third, however, still holding the letter, ushered Nikky into a small side room, a sort of study, since it contained a desk. For kings must pursue their clerical occupations even on holiday. A plain little room it was, containing an American typewriter, and beside the desk only a chair or two upholstered in red morocco.

Nikky had reluctantly removed his cap. His goggles, however, he ventured to retain. He was conscious that his guide was studying him intently. But not with suspicion, he thought. Rather as one who would gage the caliber of the man before him. He seemed satisfied, too, for his voice, which had been curt, grew more friendly.

"You had no trouble?" he asked.

"None, sir."

"Did Niburg say anything?"

Niburg, then, was the spy of the cathedral. Nikky reflected. Suddenly he saw a way out. It was, he afterward proclaimed, not his own thought. It came to him like a message. He burned a candle to his patron saint, some time later, for it.

"The man Niburg had had an unfortunate experience, sir. He reported that, during an evening stroll, before he met me, he was attacked by three men, with the evident intention of securing the letter. He was badly beaten up."

His companion started. "Niburg," he said. "Then——" He glanced at the letter he held. "We must find some one else," he muttered. "I never trusted the fellow. A clerk, nothing else. For this work it takes wit."

Nikky, sweating with strain, felt that it did indeed. "He was badly used up, sir," he offered. "Could hardly walk, and was still trembling with excitement when I met him."

The man reflected. A serious matter, he felt. Not so serious as it might have been,

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since he held the letter. But it showed many things, and threatened others. He touched a bell. "Tell his Majesty," he said to the servant who appeared, "that his messenger is here."

The servant bowed and withdrew.

Nikky found the wait that followed trying. He thought of Hedwig, and of the little Crown Prince. Suddenly he knew that he had had no right to attempt this thing. He had given his word, almost his oath, to the King, to protect and watch over the boy. And here he was, knowing now that mischief was afoot, and powerless. He cursed himself for his folly.

Then Karl came in. He came alone, closing the door behind him. Nikky and his companion bowed, and Nikky surveyed him through his goggles. The same mocking face he remembered, from Karl's visit to the summer palace, the same easy, graceful carriage, the same small mustache. He was in evening dress, and the bosom of his shirt was slightly rumpled. He had been drinking, but he was not intoxicated. He was slightly flushed, his eyes were abnormally bright. He looked, for the moment, rather amiable. Nikky was to learn, later on, how easily his smile hardened to a terrifying grin. The long, rather delicate nose of his family, fine hair growing a trifle thin, and a thin, straight body—this was Karl, King of Karnia, and long-time enemy to Nikky's own land.

He ignored Nikky's companion. "You brought a letter?"

Nikky bowed, and the other man held it out. Karl took it.

"The trip was uneventful?"

"Yes, sire."

"A bad night for it," Karl observed, and glanced at the letter in his hand. "Was there any difficulty at the frontier?"

"None, sire."

Karl tore the end off the envelope. "You will remain here to-night," he said. "To-morrow morning I shall send dispatches to the city. I hope you have petrol. These fellows here——" He did not complete the sentence. He inserted two royal fingers into the envelope and drew out—Nikky's cigaret papers!

For a moment there was complete silence in the room. Karl turned the papers over.

It was then that his face hardened into a horrible grin. He looked up, raising his head slowly.

"What is this?" he demanded, very quietly.

"The letter, sire," said Nikky. "I——"

"The letter! Do you call these a letter?"

Nikky drew himself up. "I have brought the envelope which was given me."

Without a word Karl held out papers and envelope to the other man, who took them. Then he turned to Nikky, and now he raised his voice. "Where did you get this—hoax?" he demanded.

"At the cathedral, from the man Niburg."

"You lie!" said Karl. Then, for a moment, he left Nikky and turned on his companion in a fury. He let his royal rage beat on that unlucky individual while the agent stood, white and still. Not until it was over, and Karl, spent with passion, was pacing the floor, did Nikky venture a word.

"If this is not what your Majesty expected," he said, "there is perhaps an explanation."

Karl wheeled on him. "Explanation!"

"The man Niburg was attacked, early last evening, by three men. They beat him badly, and attempted to rob him. His story to me, sire. He believed that they were after the letter, but that he had preserved it. It is, of course, a possibility that, while he lay stunned, they substituted another envelope for the one he carried."

Karl tore the envelope from the agent's hands and inspected it carefully. Evidently, as with the agent, the story started a new train of thought. Nikky drew a long breath. After all, there was still hope that the early morning shooting would have another target than himself.

Karl sat down, and his face relaxed. It was stern, but no longer horrible. "Tell me this Niburg's story," he commanded.

"He was walking through the old city," Nikky commenced, "when three men fell on him. One, a large one, knocked him insensible and then went through his pockets. The others——"

"Strange!" said Karl. "If he was insensible, how does he know all this?"

"It was his story, sire," Nikky explained. But he colored. "A companion, who was with him, ran away."

"This companion," Karl queried. "A dark, heavy fellow, was it?"

"No. Rather a pale man, blond. A——" Nikky checked himself.

But Karl was all suavity. "So," he said,

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"while Niburg was unconscious the large man took the letter, which was sealed, magically opened it, extracted its contents, replaced them with—this, and then sealed it again!"

The King turned without haste to a drawer in his desk, and opened it. He was smiling. When he faced about again, Nikky saw that he held a revolver in his hand. Save that the agent had taken a step forward, nothing in the room had changed. And yet, for Nikky everything had changed.

Nikky had been a reckless fool, but he was brave enough. He smiled, a better smile than Karl's twisted one.

"I have a fancy," said King Karl, "to manage this matter for myself. Keep back, Kaiser. Now, my friend, you will give me the packet of cigaret papers you carry."

Resistance would do no good. Nikky brought them out, and Karl's twisted smile grew broader as he compared them with the ones the envelope had contained.

"You see," he said, "you show the hand of the novice. You should have thrown these away. But, of course, all your methods are wrong. Why, for instance, have you come here at all? You have my man—but that I shall take up later. We will first have the letter."

But here Nikky stood firm. Let them find the letter. He would not help them. But again he cursed himself. There had been a thousand hiding-places along the road—but he must bring the incriminating thing with him, and condemn himself!

Now commenced a curious scene, curious because one of the actors was Karl of Karnia himself. He seemed curiously loath to bring in assistance, did Karl. Or perhaps the novelty of the affair appealed to him. And Nikky's resistance to search, with that revolver so close, was short-lived.

Even while he was struggling, Nikky was thinking. Let them get the letter, if they must. Things would at least be no worse than before. But he resolved that no violence would tear from him the place where the messenger was hidden. Until they had got that, he had a chance for life.

They searched his cap last. Nikky, panting after that strange struggle, saw Kaiser take it from the lining of his cap, and pass it to the King.

Karl took it. The smile was gone now, and something ugly and terrible had taken its place. But that, too, faded as he looked at the letter.

It was a blank piece of note-paper.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Father and Daughter

WITH the approach of the anniversary of his son's death, the King grew increasingly restless. Each year he determined to put away this old grief, and each year, as his bodily weakness increased, he found it harder to do so. In vain he filled his weary days with the routine of his kingdom. In vain he told himself that there were worse things than to be cut off in one's prime, that the tragedy of old age is a long tragedy, with but one end. To have outlived all that one loves, he felt, was worse by far. To have driven, in one gloomy procession after another, to the old Capuchin church and there to have left, prayerfully, some dearly beloved body—that had been his life. His son had escaped that. But it was poor comfort to him.

On other years he had had the Crown Prince with him as much as possible on this dreary day of days. But the Crown Prince was exiled, in disgrace. Not even for the comfort of his small presence could stern discipline be relaxed.

Annunciata was not much comfort to him. They had always differed, more or less, the truth being, perhaps, that she was too much like the King ever to sympathize fully with him. Both were arrogant, determined, obstinate. And those qualities, which age was beginning to soften in the King, were now, in Annunciata, in full strength and blooming.

But there was more than fundamental similarity at fault. Against her father the Archduchess held her unhappy marriage.

"You did this," she had said once, when an unusually flagrant escapade had come to the ears of the palace. "You did it. I told you I hated him. I told you what he was, too. But you had some plan in mind. The plan never materialized, but the marriage did. And here I am." She had turned on him then, not angrily, but with cold hostility. "I shall never forgive you for it," she said.

She never had. She made her daily visit to her father, and, as he grew more feeble, she was moved now and then to pity for him. But it was pity, nothing more. The very hands with which she sometimes

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changed his pillows were coldly efficient. She had not kissed him in years.

And now, secretly willing that Hedwig should marry Karl, she was ready to annoy him by objecting to it.

On the day after her conversation with General Mettlich, she visited the King. It was afternoon. The King had spent the morning in his study, propped with pillows as was always the case now, working with a secretary. The secretary was gone when she entered, and he sat alone. Over his knees was spread one of the brilliant rugs that the peasants wove in winter evenings, when the snow beat about their small houses and the cattle were snug in barns. Above it his thin old face looked pinched and pale.

He had passed a trying day. Once having broken down the Chancellor's barrier of silence, the King had insisted on full knowledge, with the result that he had sat, aghast, amid the ruins of his former complacency. The country and the smaller cities were comparatively quiet, so far as demonstrations against the government were concerned. But unquestionably they plotted. As for the capital, it was a seething riot of sedition, from the reports. A copy of a newspaper, secretly printed and more secretly circulated, had brought fire to the King's eyes. It lay on his knees as his daughter entered.

Annunciata touched her lips to his hand. Absorbed as he was in other matters, it struck him, as she bent, that Annunciata was no longer young, and that Time was touching her with an unloving finger. He viewed her graying hair, her ugly clothes, with the detached eye of age. And he sighed.

"Well, father," she said, looking down at him, "how do you feel?"

"Sit down," he said. The question as to his health was too perfunctory to require reply. Besides, he anticipated trouble, and it was an age-long habit of his to meet it half way.

Annunciata sat, with a jingling of chains. She chose a straight chair, and faced him, very erect.

"How old is Hedwig?" demanded the King.

"Nineteen."

"And Hilda?"

"Sixteen."

He knew their ages quite well. It was merely the bugle before the attack.

"Hedwig is old enough to marry. Her grandmother was not nineteen when I married her."

"It would be better," said Annunciata, "to marry her while she is young, before she knows any better."

"Any better than what?" inquired the King testily.

"Any better than to marry at all."

The King eyed her. She was not, then, even attempting to hide her claws. But he was an old bird, and not to be caught in an argumentative cage.

"There are several possibilities for Hedwig," he said. "I have gone into the matter pretty thoroughly. As you know, I have had this on my mind for some time. It is necessary to arrange things before I—go."

The King, of course, was neither asking nor expecting sympathy from her, but mentally, and somewhat grimly, he compared her unmoved face with that of his old friend and Chancellor, only a few nights before.

"It is a regretful fact," he went on, "that I must leave, as I shall, a sadly troubled country. But for that—" he paused. But for that, he meant, he would go gladly. He needed rest. His spirit, still so alive, chafed daily more and more against its worn body. He believed in another life, did the old King. He wanted the hearty handclasp of his boy again. Even the wife who had married him against her will had grown close to him in later years. He needed her, too. A little rest, then, and after that a new life with those who had gone ahead.

"A sadly troubled country," he repeated.

"All countries are troubled. We are no worse than others."

"Perhaps not. But things are changing. The old order is changing. The spirit of unrest—I shall not live to see it. You may, Annunciata. But the day is coming when all thrones will totter. Like this one."

Now at last he had pierced her armor. "Like this one!"

"That is what I said. Rouse yourself, Annunciata. Leave that little boudoir of yours, with its accursed clocks and its heat and its flub-dubbery, and see what is about you! Discontent! Revolution! We are hardly safe from day to day. Do you think that what happened nine years ago was a flash that died as it came? Nonsense. Read this!"

He held out the paper and she put on her

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pince-nez and read its headings, a trifle disdainfully. But the next moment she rose, and stood in front of him, almost as pale as he was. "You allow this sort of thing to be published?"

"No. But it is published."

"And they dare to say things like this? Why, it—it is——"

"Exactly. It is, undoubtedly." He was very calm. "I would not have troubled you with it. But the situation is bad. We are rather helpless."

"Not—the army too?"

"What can we tell? These things spread like fires. Nothing may happen for years. On the other hand, to-morrow——!"

The Archduchess was terrified. She had known that there was disaffection about. She knew that in the last few years precautions at the palace had been increased. Sentries were doubled. Men in the uniforms of lackeys, but doing no labor, were everywhere. But with time and safety she had felt secure.

"Of course," the King resumed, "things are not as bad as that paper indicates. It is the voice of the few, rather than the many. Still, it is a voice."

Annunciata looked more than her age now. She glanced around the room as though, already, she heard the mob at the doors.

"It is not safe to stay here, is it?" she asked. "We could go to the summer palace. That, at least, is isolated."

"Too isolated," said the King dryly. "And flight! The very spark, perhaps, to start a blaze. Besides," he reminded her, "I could not make the journey. If you would like to go, however, probably it can be arranged."

But Annunciata was not minded to go without the Court. And she reflected, not unwisely, that if things were really as bad as they appeared, to isolate herself, helpless in the mountains, would be but to play into the enemy's hand.

"To return to the matter of Hedwig's marriage," said the King. "I——"

"Marriage! When our very lives are threatened!"

"I would be greatly honored," said the King, "if I might be permitted to finish what I was saying."

She had the grace to flush.

"Under the circumstances," the King resumed, "Hedwig's marriage takes on great significance. Great political significance."

For a half hour then, he talked to her. More than for years, he unbosomed himself. He had tried. His ministers had tried. Taxes had been lightened; the representation of the people increased, until, as he said, he was only nominally a ruler. But discontent remained. Some who had gone to America and returned with savings enough to set themselves up in business, had brought back with them the American idea.

He spoke without bitterness. They refused to allow for the difference between a new country and an old land, tilled for many generations. They forgot their struggles across the sea and brought back only stories of prosperity. Emigration had increased, and those who remained whispered of a new order, where each man was the government, and no man a king.

Annunciata listened to the end. She felt no pity for those who would better themselves by discontent and its product, revolt. She felt only resentment, that her peace was being threatened, her position assailed. And in her resentment she included the King himself. He should have done better. These things, taken early enough, could have been arranged.

And something of this she did not hesitate to say. "Karnia is quiet enough," she finished, a final thrust.

"Karnia is better off. A lowland, most of it, and fertile." But a spot of color showed in his old cheeks. "I am glad you spoke of Karnia. Whatever plans we make, Karnia must be considered."

"Why? Karnia does not consider us."

He raised his hand. "You are wrong. Just now, Karnia is doing us the honor of asking an alliance with us. A matrimonial alliance."

The Archduchess was hardly surprised, as one may believe. But she was not minded to yield too easily. The old resentment against her father flamed. Indifferent mother though she was, she made capital of a fear for Hedwig's happiness. In a cold and quiet voice she reminded him of her own wretchedness, and of Karl's reputation.

At last she succeeded in irritating the King—a more difficult thing now than in earlier times, but not so hard a matter at that. He listened quietly until she had finished, and then sent her away. When she had got part way to the door, however, he called her back. And since a king is a

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THE CHANCELLOR SAT SILENT DURING THE CONCLAVE, AND WAITED UNTIL AT LAST
THEM IN FULL. THEN, AND ONLY THEN,

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KARL'S PROPOSAL, WITH ITS PROMISES, WAS LAID BEFORE HE ROSE. HIS SPEECH WAS SHORT.

king, even if he is one's father and very old, she came.

"Just one word more," he said, in his thin old high-bred voice. "Much of your unhappiness was of your own making. You, and you only, know how much. But nothing that you have said can change the situation. I am merely compelled to make the decision alone, and soon. I have not much time."

So, after all, was the matter of the Duchess Hedwig's marriage arranged, a composite outgrowth of expediency and obstinacy, of defiance and anger. And so was it hastened.

Irritation gave the King strength. That afternoon were summoned in haste the members of his Council, fat old Friese, young Marschall with the rat face, austere Bayerl with the white skin and burning eyes, and others. And to them all the King disclosed his royal will. There was some demur. Friese, who sweated with displeasure, ranted about old enemies and broken pledges. But, after all, the King's will was dominant. Friese could but voice his protest and relapse into greasy silence.

The Chancellor sat silent during the conclave, silent, but intent. On each speaker he turned his eyes, and waited until at last Karl's proposal, with its promises, was laid before them in full. Then,

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and only then, the Chancellor rose. His speech was short. He told them what they all knew, their own insecurity. He spoke but a word of the Crown Prince, but that softly. And he drew for them a picture of the future that set their hearts to glowing—a throne secure, a greater kingdom, freedom from the costs of war, a harbor by the sea.

And if, as he spoke, he saw not the rat eyes of Marschall, the greedy ones of some of the others, but instead a girl's wide and pleading ones, he resolutely went on. Life was a sacrifice. Youth would pass, and love with it, but the country must survive.

The battle, which was no battle at all, was won. He had won. The country had won. The Crown Prince had won. Only Hedwig had lost. And only Mettlich knew just how she had lost.

When the Council, bowing deep, had gone away, the Chancellor remained standing by a window. He was feeling old and very tired. All that day, until the Council met with the King, he had sat in the little office on a back street, which was the headquarters of the secret service. All that day men had come and gone, bringing false clues which led nowhere. The earth had swallowed up Nikky Larisch.

"I hope you are satisfied," said the King grimly, from behind him. "It was your arrangement."

"It was my hope, sire," replied the Chancellor, dryly.

The necessity for work brought the King the strength to do it. Mettlich remained with him. Boxes were brought from vaults, unlocked and examined. Secretaries came and went. At eight o'clock a frugal dinner was spread in the study, and they ate it almost literally over state documents.

On and on, until midnight or thereabouts. Then they stopped. The thing was arranged. Remained now but to carry the word to Karl.

Two things were necessary: Haste. The King, having determined it, would lose no time. And dignity. The granddaughter of the King must be offered with ceremony. No ordinary King's messenger, then, but some dignitary of the Court.

To this emergency Mettlich rose like the doughty old warrior and statesman that he was. "If you are willing, sire," he said, as he rose, "I will go myself."

"When?"

"Since it must be done, the sooner the better. To-night, sire."

The King smiled. "You were always impatient!" he commented. But he looked almost wistfully at the sturdy and competent old figure before him. Thus was he, not so long ago. Cold nights and spring storms had had no terrors for him. And something else he felt, although he said nothing—the stress of a situation which would send his Chancellor out at midnight, into a driving storm, to secure Karl's support. Things must be bad indeed!

"To the capital?" he asked.

"Not so far. Karl is hunting. He is at Wedeling."

He went almost immediately, and the King summoned his valets, and was got to bed. But long after the automobile containing Mettlich and two secret agents was on the road toward the mountains, he tossed on his narrow bed. To what straits had they come indeed! He closed his eyes wearily. Something had gone out of his life. He did not realize at first what it was. When he did, he smiled his old, grim smile in the darkness.

He had lost a foe. More than anything, perhaps, he had dearly loved a foe.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

On the Mountain Road

THE low gray car which carried the Chancellor was on its way through the mountains. It moved deliberately, for two reasons. First, the Chancellor was afraid of motors. He had a horseman's hatred and fear of machines. Second, he was not of a mind to rouse King Karl from a night's sleep, even to bring the hand of the Princess Hedwig. His intention was to put up at some inn in a village not far from the lodge and to reach Karl by messenger early in the morning, before the hunters left for the day.

Then, all being prepared duly and in order, Mettlich himself would arrive, and things would go forward with dignity and dispatch.

In the meantime he sat back among his furs and thought of many things. He had won a victory which was, after all, but a compromise. He had chosen the safe way, but it led over the body of a young girl, and he loathed it. Also, he thought of Nikky, and what might be. But the car

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was closed and comfortable. The motion soothed him. After a time he dropped asleep.

The valley of the Ar deepened. The cliff rose above them, a wall broken here and there by the offtake of narrow ravines, filled with forest-trees. There was a pause while the chains on the rear wheels were supplemented by others in front, for there must be no danger of a skid. And another pause, where the road slanted perilously toward the brink of the chasm, and caution dictated that the Chancellor alight, and make a hundred feet or so of dangerous curve afoot.

It required diplomacy to get him out. But it was finally done, and his heavy figure, draped in its military cape, went on ahead, outlined by the lamps of the car behind him. The snow was hardly more than a coating, but wet and slippery. Mettlich stalked on, as one who would defy the elements, or anything else, to hinder him that night.

He was well around the curve, and the cliff was broken by a wedge of timber, when a curiously shaped object projected itself over the edge of the bank, and rolling down lay almost at his feet. The lamps brought it into sharp relief—a man, gagged and tied, and rolled, cigar shape, in an automobile robe.

The Chancellor turned, and called to his men. Then he bent over the bundle. The others ran up, and cut the bonds. What with cold and long inaction, and his recent drop over the bank, the man could not speak. One of the secret-service men had a flask, and held it to his lips. An amazing situation, indeed, increased by the discovery that under the robe he wore only his undergarments, with a soldier's tunic wrapped around his shoulders. They carried him into the car, where he lay with head lolling back, and his swollen tongue protruding. Half dead he was with cold and long anxiety. The brandy cleared his mind long before he could speak, and he saw by the uniforms that he was in the hands of the enemy. He turned sulkily silent then, convinced that he had escaped one death but to meet another. Twenty-four hours now he had faced eternity, and he was ready.

He preferred, however, to die fully clothed, and when, in response to his pointing up the bank and to his inarticulate mouthings, one of the secret police examined the bit of woodland with his pocket flash, he found a pair of trousers where Nikky had left them, neatly folded and hung over the branch of a tree. The brandy being supplemented by hot coffee from a patent bottle, the man revived further, made an effort, and sat up. His tongue was still swollen, but they made out what he said. He had been there since the night before. People had passed, a few peasants, a man with a cart, but he could not cry out, and he had hesitated to risk the plunge to the road. But at last he had made it. He was of Karnia, and a King's messenger.

"I was coming back from the barrier," he said thickly, "where I had carried dispatches to the officer in charge. On my return a man hailed me from the side of the road, near where you found me. I thought that he desired to be taken on, and stopped my car. But he attacked me. He was armed and I was not. He knocked me senseless, and when I awakened I was above the road, among trees. I gave myself up when the snow commenced. Few pass this way. But I heard your car coming and made a desperate effort."

"Then," asked one of the agents, "these are not your clothes?"

"They are his, sir."

The agent produced a flash-light and inspected the garments. Before the Chancellor's eyes, button by button, strap on the sleeve, star on the cuff, came into view the uniform of a captain of his own regiment, the Grenadiers. Then one of his own men had done this infamous thing, one of his own officers, indeed.

"Go through the pockets," he continued sternly.

Came into view under the flash a pair of gloves, a box of matches, a silk handkerchief, a card-case. The agent said nothing, but passed a card to the Chancellor, who read it without comment.

There was silence in the car.

At last the Chancellor stirred. "This man—he took your car on?"

"Yes. And he has not returned. No other machine has passed."

The secret-service men exchanged glances. There was more to this than appeared then. Somewhere ahead, then, was Nikky Larisch, with a motor that did not belong to him, and wearing clothing which his victim described as a chauffeur's coat of leather, breeches and puttees, and a fur greatcoat over all.

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"Had the snow commenced when this happened?"

"Not then, sir. Shortly after."

"Go out with the driver," the Chancellor ordered one of his men, "and watch the road for the tracks of another car. Go slowly."

So it was that, after an hour or so, they picked up Nikky's trail, now twenty-four hours old but still clear, and followed it. The Chancellor was awake enough by this time, and bending forward. The man they had rescued slept heavily. As the road descended into the foot-hills, there were other tracks in the thin snow, and more than once they roused Nikky's victim to pick out his own tire marks. He obeyed dully. When at last the trail turned from the highway toward the shooting-box at Wedeling, Metlich fell back with something between a curse and a groan.

"The fool!" he muttered. "The young fool! It was madness."

At last they drew up at an inn in the village on the royal preserve, and the Chancellor, looking rather gray, alighted. He directed that the man they had rescued be brought in. The Chancellor was not for losing him just yet. He took a room for him at the inn, and rather cavalierly locked him in it.

The dull-eyed landlord, yawning as he lighted the party up-stairs with candles, apparently neither noticed nor cared that the three of them surrounded a fourth, and that the fourth looked both sullen and ill.

The car, with one of the secret-service men, Mettlich sent on to follow Nikky's trail, and to report it to him. The other man was assigned to custody of the chauffeur. The Chancellor, more relieved than he would have acknowledged, reflected before a fire and over a glass of hot milk that he was rather unpropitiously bringing Karl a bride!

It was almost four in the morning when the police agent returned. The track he had followed apparently led into the grounds of Wedeling, but was there lost in many others. It did not, so far as he could discover, lead beyond the lodge gates.

The Chancellor sipped his hot milk and considered. Nikky Larisch a prisoner in Karl's hands caused him less anxiety than it would have a month before. But what was behind it all?

The inn, grumbling at its broken rest, settled down to sleep again. The two secret-service agents took turns on chairs outside their prisoner's door, glancing in occasionally to see that he still slept in his built-in bed.

At a little before five the man outside the prisoner's door heard something inside the room. He glanced in. All was quiet. The prisoner slept heavily, genuine sleep. There was no mistaking it, the sleep of a man warm after long cold and exhaustion, weary after violent effort. The agent went out again, and locked the door behind him.

And as the door closed, a trap-door from the kitchen below opened softly under the sleeping man's bed. With great caution came the landlord, head first, then shoulders. The space was cramped. He crawled up, like a snake out of a hole, and ducked behind the curtains of the bed. All was still quiet, save that the man outside struck a match and lighted a pipe.

Half an hour later, the Chancellor's prisoner, still stiff and weak, was making his way toward the hunting-lodge.

Kaiser saw him first, and found the story unenlightening. Nor could Karl, roused by a terrified valet, make much more of it. When the man had gone, Karl lay back among his pillows and eyed his agent.

"So Mettlich is here!" he said, "A hasty journey. They must be eager."

"They must be in trouble." Kaiser observed dryly. And on that uncomplimentary comment King Karl slept, his face drawn into a wry smile.

But he received the Chancellor of Livonia cordially the next morning, going himself to the lodge doorstep to meet his visitor, and there shaking hands with him.

"I am greatly honored, Excellency," he said, with his twisted smile.

"And I, sire."

But the Chancellor watched him from under his shaggy brows. The messenger had escaped. By now Karl knew the story, knew of his midnight ride over the mountains, and the haste it indicated. He sheathed himself in dignity, did the Chancellor, held his head high and moved ponderously, as became one who came to talk of important matters, but not to ask a boon.

Karl himself led the way to his study, ignoring the chamberlain, and stood aside to let Mettlich enter. Then he followed and closed the door.

"It is a long time since you have honored Karnia with a visit," Karl observed. "Will you sit down?"

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Karl himself did not sit. He stood negligently beside the mantel, an arm stretched along it.

"Not since the battle of the Ar, sire," replied the Chancellor dryly. He had headed an army of invasion then.

Karl smiled. "I hope that now your errand is more peaceful."

For answer the Chancellor opened a portfolio he carried, and fumbled among its papers. But, having found the right one, he held it without opening it. "Before we come to that, sire, you have here, I believe, detained for some strange reason a Captain Larisch, *aide-de-camp*—" he paused for effect—"to his Royal Highness, the Crown Prince of Livonia."

Karl glanced up quickly. "Perhaps, if you will describe this—gentleman——"

"Nonsense," said the Chancellor testily. "You have him. We have traced him here. Although by what authority you hold him I fail to understand. I am here to find out what you have done with him." The paper trembled in the old man's hand. He knew very well Karl's quick anger, and he feared for Nikky. Feared horribly.

"Done with him?" echoed Karl. "If as Captain Larisch you refer to a madman who the night before last——"

"I do, sire. Madman is the word."

Of course, it is not etiquette to interrupt a king. But kings were no novelty to the Chancellor. And quite often, for reasons of state, he had found interruptions necessary.

"He is a prisoner," Karl said, in a new tone, stern enough now. "He assaulted and robbed one of my men. He stole certain documents. That he has not suffered for it already was because—well, because I believed that the unfortunate distrust between your country and mine, Excellency, was about to end."

A threat that, undoubtedly. Let the arrangement between Karnia and Livonia be made, with Hedwig to seal the bargain, and Nikky was safe enough. But let Livonia demand too much, or not agree at all, and Nikky was lost. Thus did Nikky Larisch play his small part in the game of nations.

"Suppose," said Karl, unctuously, "that we discuss first another more important matter. I confess to a certain impatience." He bowed slightly.

The Chancellor hesitated. Then he glanced thoughtfully at the paper in his hand.

Through a long luncheon, the two alone and even the servants dismissed, through a longer afternoon, negotiations went on. Mettlich fought hard on some points, only to meet defeat. Karl stood firm. The great fortresses on the border must hereafter contain only nominal garrisons. For the seaport strip he had almost doubled his price. The railroad must be completed within two years.

"Since I made my tentative proposal," Karl said, "certain things have come to my ears which must be considered. A certain amount of unrest we all have. It is a part of the times we live in. But strange stories have reached us here, that your revolutionary party is again active, and threatening. This proposal was made to avoid wars, not to marry them. And civil war—" he shrugged his shoulders.

"You have said yourself, sire, that we all have a certain discontent."

"The Princess Hedwig," Karl said suddenly. "She has been told, of course?"

"Not officially. She knows, however."

"How does she regard it?"

The Chancellor hesitated. "Like most young women, she would prefer making her own choice. But that," he added hastily, "is but a whim. She is a lovable and amiable girl. When the time comes, she will be willing enough."

Karl stared out through one of the heavily curtained windows. He was not so sure. And the time had gone by when he would have enjoyed the taming of a girl. Now he wanted peace—was he not paying a price for it?—and children to inherit his well-managed kingdom. And perhaps—who knows?—a little love. His passionate young days were behind him, but he craved something that his unruly life had not brought him. Before him rose a vision of Hedwig, her frank eyes, her color that rose and fell, her soft round body.

"You have no reason to believe that she has—looked elsewhere?"

"None, sire," said the Chancellor stoutly.

By late afternoon all was arranged, papers signed and witnessed, and the two signatures affixed, the one small and cramped—a soldier's hand, the other bold and flowing—the scrawl of a king. And Hedwig, save for the ceremony, was the bride of Karl of Karnia.

The next instalment of ***"Long Live the King!"*** *will appear in the May number.*

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THE FORTY-TWO-CENTIMETER BLUE PENCIL

Confessions of a Censor-Fighter

By

William G. Shepherd

THOUGHTS OF HOME AND LOVED ONES HAD COME OVER THE WAR-BOUND OFFICERS.

SKETCHES BY
BOARDMAN ROBINSON

How much does censorship warp the news? Mr. Shepherd has had wide experience on which to base an answer. He has reported the war from every important battle-front in Europe. He has had to submit copy to the censors of almost every warring nation. As correspondent of the United Press, he covered the destruction of Belgium; he was the only newspaper man who saw the second battle of Ypres; he was the first American reporter permitted at the British front in France. He has been at the German front; with the Austrians at Przemysl; with the Italians in the Trieste district. He reported four of the greatest retreats of the war, including the retreat of the Austrians, and later that of the Servians, from Servia. This article, which tells of the "sawdust trail" in war-reporting, answers the questions we have all asked about the censorship in reading our war news.—THE EDITOR.

I STARTED my war reporting as a censor-fighter.

Censorship distorts the news, and any inexperienced and conscientious war reporter considers himself justified in censor-baiting. He starts out in his career of war reporting as a "bad man," belligerent for truth, feeling that there is a certain holiness in his attitude.

But there is a "sawdust trail" that, after a time, he will hit. Like sin (which a certain evangelist named after a certain legal holiday declares "you can't beat") the censor's big blue pencil will, in time, bring every war reporter to repentance. If it doesn't, then his career as a war reporter is irrevocably ended and he'll probably go back home.

You can't be a war reporter in these days and not be "good."

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MY FIRST experience with war was with little Francisco Madero in Mexico, in 1910; and the first censor that ever put blue pencil to my copy was Madero's agent in Mexico City. The Orozco revolution gave me further experience of censors, and prepared me for the iron-clad censorship which Huerta installed in Mexico City during the days when he sat in the unsteady hammock of the Mexican presidency and watched "the old cat die."

Then, at Vera Cruz, I spent several months under the censorship of the American army and navy. And from Uncle Sam's kind guidance of my copy I passed to the censorships in Europe.

During the past three years I have been continuously under censorship, even as to my personal correspondence; and when I returned to the United States, recently, I greatly missed having some one to whom I could show the letters I wrote to my mother and friends, before dropping them in the mail-box. I felt inclined to ask the nearest policeman or hallboy—somebody in uniform—to put his O. K. on them.

I started out, as I have said, a censor-fighter; and it's on the books that I've had my share of luck at the game. But fourteen censorships through which I have passed (and I have written copy that has been censored by three European nations at a time) have taught me a better way, of which I shall write later.

I had had good luck with the Mexicans, and, though I had not tried to beat the American censors at Vera Cruz, for patriotic reasons, I felt my duty to my editors demanded that I outwit all the European censors who came my way.

After a short experience of a few rather newsless days on the Ally side, I went into Germany, and there my first experience confirmed my belief that censors were my enemies, and put me on the

LONDON'S FIRST TASTE OF DEATH FROM THE SKIES.

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THE CENSOR'S BLUE PENCIL IS MIGHTIER THAN THE FORTY-TWO-CENTIMETER GUN.

offensive against the whole tribe of them. The experience was this:

In the city of Munich I wrote a harmless but colorful story about war conditions in the town and took it to the office of the censor. He was an elderly German colonel, highly decorated, who spoke English excellently. He greeted me effusively, as I laid the copy on the high desk where he stood at work.

"An American!" he exclaimed. "I'm very glad to meet you. America to-day is the conscience of the world; all the rest of us have gone mad. It will please me greatly to help you get the truth back to your country. The truth is all that we Germans ask."

He read over my story, folded it up without changing a word, and handed it to me with the envelope.

"You may mail it yourself," he said. "I'm sure I can trust you."

I opened the folded manuscript and started to write the word "Censored" on it.

In a flash his kindness fell away. "Please do not say that your article has been censored," he said. "Let it go, just as it is."

I was forced, of course, to yield to his demand. But there was a lie in that piece of manuscript; the absence of the word "censored" was a lie that warped the news value of my story. The object of omitting that one word was to carry to the outside world the impression that Germany was not hindering newspaper men in their expression of opinion.

Censorship, as I understood it at the time, was intended to cover military and political contingencies; here it was covering a lie which I was being forced to send to a neutral country.

Let me say, incidentally, that, while I have never known a censor to add words or phrases to a newspaper story that would change its meaning, nevertheless they have often changed the whole intent of a piece of news by clever cutting.

After that experience the entire German system of censorship challenged me. Its great policies of military and political safety I could understand; its petty policy of trying to mold public opinion in small matters only spurred me on to beat it, if possible. I found many other American reporters and correspondents in Germany at

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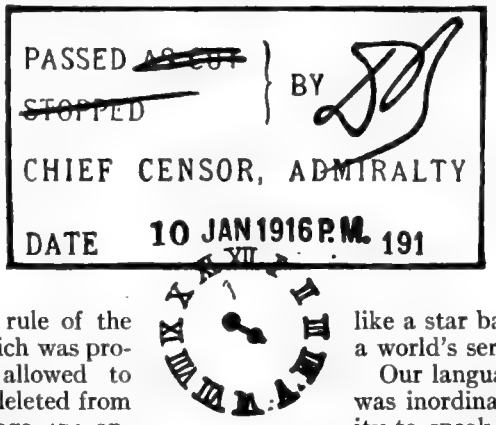
that time who felt as I did about the German system. No one resented actions by the censors which prevented reporters from sending news, but the efforts of the censorship system to use the reporters as tools in influencing neutral opinion was highly offensive.

THE SEAL OF THE BRITISH ADMIRALTY, SHOWING SIR DOUGLAS BROWNRIG'S "TIME-CLOCK."



There was another rule of the German censorship which was provoking. I was not allowed to know what had been deleted from my dispatches. On page 474 appears a photographic illustration of a page from one of my letters sent to my New York office from Przemysl, in Galicia, in November, 1914. I do not remember exactly what I wrote in the part that has been scissored out; but my subject was the efforts which the Austrians were making, with the use of slaked lime, to stamp out Asiatic cholera. I told how the railroad routes were great "white ways," and how the whiteness of lime covered everything, even the box-cars.

This was the first story I had submitted to an Austrian censor, and I expected, of course, that I should be informed as to whether it would be changed or not. It was not until many months later that I knew how my stuff was being cut. Instead of being taken into the confidence of the censor, all of the writers in our party were looked upon with deep suspicion. Indeed, the whole attitude of the censor was one of distrust and challenge.

There came suddenly one day the retreat from Przemysl, when we were put on trains and bundled off toward Budapest. We were informed that any stories which pictured our departure from Przemysl as a hasty retreat would be held up; and there was no way of getting anything out without submitting it to the censor. Here was a story to beat a censor with. In a hotel at Budapest I sat me down to a typewriter and drew forth all my stock of slang. I tried to think of the fastest thing that runs, and my mind settled on Kolehmainen, the great Finnish Marathoner. I began my story thus: "Beating it from Przemysl was one grand Kolehmainen." I wrote thirty paragraphs of the sheerest slang, covering the retreat like a star baseball writer covering a world's series game.

SEAL OF THE KAISER'S CENSORS. PLACED AT TOP AND BOTTOM OF ALL STORIES.

Our language-loving censor, who was inordinately proud of his ability to speak seven tongues, never batted an eye over that copy; the chances were that he did not understand one-third of it; but no man with a head shaped like his ever admitted that there was anything in the world he didn't know. The story went.

I had fully expected that the office in New York would decode, or deslang, the story; but it didn't. Out over the wires to every corner of the United States went the story of that gruesome retreat, written in baseball slang; and several editors wrote to the New York office suggesting that I turn out "some more of that snappy stuff, like the Przemysl retreat."

The Austrian disliked me when the echoes of that slangy Przemysl retreat story began to come back to Vienna.

It did not require many weeks' experience in Europe to indicate to me that a reporter is measured by the tact which he displays in the presentation of his stories to the censor. He is expected to know, to a certain extent, what he shall not notice in his dispatches and what it is proper to write about; and my war experience had not continued long before I discovered that censor-fighting was the least productive pastime in which a war reporter could engage.

Many another correspondent was going through the same change of mind. There came a time in the war when I stood with a man at Naples who was shortly to board a boat that would take him directly to the

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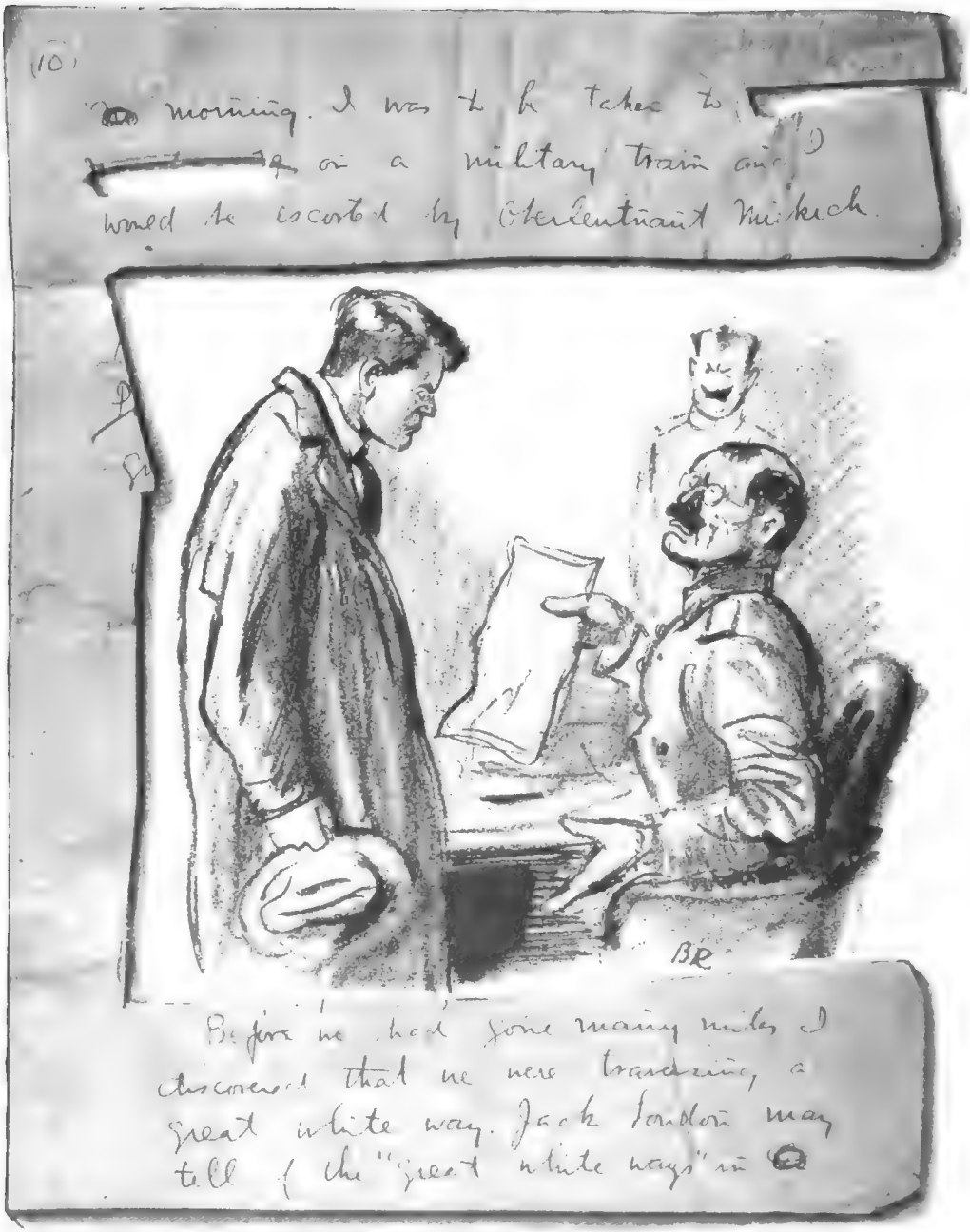
(10)
morning. I was to be taken to
on a military train and
would be escorted by Oberleutnant Minkuch.
Before we had gone many miles I
discovered that we were travelling a
great white way. Jack London may
tell of the "great white ways" in

WHAT AN AUSTRIAN CENSOR, WHO FELT THAT SCISSORS WERE SAFER THAN PENCIL, DID TO ONE OF THE PAGES OF A STORY SENT BY MR. SHEPHERD FROM PRZEMYSL, IN GALICIA.

foot of Twenty-third Street in New York. In my pocket I had a story which I had secured and written with considerable labor, and I had only to give him the manuscript and ask him to drop it in a mail-box in New York. But I did not yield to the temptation. Beating the censor is a crime that will out; the first turn of the printing-press that is running off the story is evidence against you.

A strict watch is kept on the newspapers here in the United States by all the

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belligerent governments. Before the break Germany kept especially sharp eyes on the work of American correspondents in Berlin. Every word that is written about the war by correspondents in the warring countries is carefully analyzed by both sides, and woe to the war reporter in Europe who goes wrong. The censor-fighting spirit will be taken out of him very quickly. The foreign office will hear of any delinquency on his part in short order, and he will be put on the carpet, if not sent home.

Not long ago in Berlin an American correspondent was haled before an outraged censor, who showed him a clipping of one of his stories, taken from an American country newspaper. The headline of the story—which had been stolen by the country newspaper from a metropolitan daily—was highly pro-enemy, and the country editor, in sarcastic vein, had black-typed certain sentences in such a way as to make it appear that he considered them preposterous and unworthy of belief. The correspondent had to explain, at great length, that he had not sent the story to the little country newspaper, and that he was not responsible for the headlines and the blackened type. Fully six weeks passed before this correspondent was finally assured that the German War Office did not hold him responsible for the story, six weeks being the time required for an agent in the United States to look up the little newspaper in question and verify the correspondent's explanation.

IN THE early days of the war, when everything was new and every word was news, the censor was the correspondent's open enemy. The censors made no bones about it. They were afraid of correspondents and—well, the correspondents were afraid of the censors.

A certain New York newspaper manager, who felt that he was not getting a sufficient news return for the money he was spending, got on a boat, a month or so after the war had started, determined to go to London and have it out with the censors. He felt that a little New York vim was needed in his London bureau. "I'm going to pull a little fast New York stuff," he said. With his London manager, he went to the censor's bureau. It was only by a persistent clamor that they reached a bureau censor.

"Now look here," said the New York man, "my newspapers are not trying to harm the British Government. We want to work with the censor, not against him. Won't you tell us how we can cooperate with the censor?"

"My dear man," said the Britisher, "we don't need any cooperation. This is purely a one-sided affair. Good day."

EVERY word of war news which comes from Europe to the eyes of the American public has been weighed by censors as carefully as precious stones are weighed by diamond merchants. One tiny word, or arrangement of words may send to the bottom of the sea a great ship or may cost the lives of thousands of men in the field. It's all up to the censor. As he sits at his table with telegrams, letters, and the stories of newspaper correspondents passing under his gaze, and with the weight of his country's welfare resting, to no small extent, on his shoulders, every little nervous fear of treachery, every whim of his mind, is expressed by his use of scissors or blue pencil.

"*Father is dead*," ran a cablegram from Sweden to New York which passed through the British censorship.

For some inexplicable reason the censor didn't like the word "dead." He changed it to "deceased."

Within a short time this question, sent from New York to Sweden, passed through the hands of the same censor: "*Is father dead or deceased?*"

What did that word "dead" mean? It might have covered a whole volume of enemy news; it might have provoked a disaster on land or sea. And yet the censor had no better reason for cutting it out than a certain "hunch" which came over him that the word ought to be changed.

The more I see of the censor's job, the more I sympathize with the censor, and the more I prefer to be the man who writes the stuff rather than the one who censors it. The mistakes of a writing man in war time can hardly be fatal, but the error of a censor may flame out in a catastrophe at any time. With unlimited power, he has the right to give himself the benefit of the doubt every time a doubt rises.

An excellent illustration of how the censors are always on the alert comes to my mind in connection with an interview that I had with Winston Churchill when he was first Lord of the British Admiralty in the

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early war days. During the many visits I paid to the dusty and historic old Admiralty Building and the several conferences I had with Churchill in his private office, I began to feel at home in Admiralty surroundings. I became acquainted with a number of secretaries. I chatted with them in the hallways. I was introduced to some important officials who knew that I was preparing an important article for American newspapers. Usually it was an extremely difficult matter even to enter the doors of the Admiralty Building; but the doormen and the policemen in the hallways, knowing my important mission, always greeted me pleasantly and permitted me to pass without question.

I proudly felt that I had been taken into the confidence of all the Admiralty folk about me, and I'd undergo shooting to-day rather than tell, even at this late time, some of the matters which came to my knowledge during that pleasant two weeks.

At last the interview was finished and written exactly as it was to go. Mr. Churchill, one evening at five o'clock, put his signature to it, called his secretary and said: "Please take Mr. Shepherd to the censor's office and introduce him. Tell the censor that the interview with me is all right."

I was led through a maze of gloomy hallways, lighted in part by gas, to a doorway which bore the legend "Naval Censor."

"This is Sir So-and-So, the naval censor," said the secretary, presenting me to a strong-featured, iron-gray-haired man. "This is Mr. Shepherd, an American journalist, who is sending an interview with the First Lord to America to-night."

"Very well," said the man of title, "we'll take care of it."

"I want to write just a few words to lead the story," I said. I explained that my manuscript contained only the interview, and that it would be necessary to write a short introduction.

For the first time, in my two weeks around the Admiralty, I saw distrust in the eyes of an Admiralty man. The policemen at the door might have trusted me: that was their business. The secretaries might have done the same: that was their lookout. Winston Churchill might have placed confidence in my journalistic integrity: Churchill could do as he pleased. But as for himself, he was neither a policeman, a secretary, nor the First Lord: he was the censor, whose duty is to mistrust. He was the last sieve through which my work was to pass. If I were pro-German and mine a spy's work, now was the last chance to stop it. He read the manuscript carefully.

When he had finished he looked up into my face and said: "You want to write an introduction to this, huh?"

"Yes," I answered. "It starts out too abruptly for an American newspaper story."

He hesitated a minute. Then he said: "All right. Write it here. But, listen! No flubdub!" He looked me square in the eye.

I knew what he meant by that phrase "no flubdub." He meant: "These fellows around here may trust you, but I don't. I'm the censor and you're a newspaper man. Every reporter's a wrong 'un to me until he proves he's right. I know you've got an interview with the First Lord of the British Admiralty. I know it's what you call a big newspaper stunt, and that, by to-morrow morning, it will be read by millions and millions of human beings in many languages, and that it will be telling England's side of the war to the world. But none of that impresses me. I'm not going to give you the benefit of any doubt. If you are a wrong 'un, look out!"

"Write an introduction yourself," I suggested.

"Go ahead with yours," he said, grimly.

I wrote, with a lead-pencil, at the head of the article, these words: "Winston Churchill, First Lord of the British Admiralty, granted me an interview to-day," and pushed the copy over to him.

"Is that all?" he said, more gently.

"I can't think of any more to say," I answered.

"Very good," he said, smiling, as I rose to go. "I was afraid you were going to write something intricate."

He telephoned to the cable-office, ordered that the interview be given right-of-way, and within fifty-five minutes the story was in New York.

He had been protecting England and himself. As a censor he was a hundred-per-center. But he was not a friend of newspaper men. A good censor and a good war reporter can never be real friends—unless the war reporter is working with his own army and is moved by patriotism.

Considering the censor's responsibility, it is always a source of wonder to me that

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he ever lets anything go through. In my extensive dealings with censors I have been more surprised at what they have permitted me to send than at what they have cut out. Whatever success any of the American correspondents have had in getting "tough" war stories past the censor has grown out of the fact that they sympathized with him and tried to get his view-point.

In the office of a great news association recently the editor showed me a pile of typewritten copy which had been sent by mail from a certain capital in Europe. The signature of a censor was at the bottom of each page, but not one word of the several thousand had been touched with a blue pencil.

"The censors hardly ever touch our stuff, now," explained the editor. "Early in the war it used to be all chopped up, but it comes pretty clean these days."

This editor did not mean to say that the censorship had become lax. He knew as well as I did that the reason for the untouched pages was that the correspondents in Europe had learned to take the censor's view-point and to see the war through the censor's eyes. The American correspondent in any of the European countries these days knows very well that *it does not pay to try to beat the censor*. This is the one big fact that stands out just now in the war correspondent's life.

Not many months ago an American correspondent left New York for London carrying a code for the use of his London office. By means of this code the New York office hoped to receive more complete news of the sinking of ships than the censor had permitted to go out. At the risk of a severe penalty, the New York reporter had got the code past the port authorities, and he slammed it down triumphantly on the desk of the London manager.

"There's a code that'll beat 'em all," said the New Yorker.

The experienced London manager, with an expression of long-suffering patience on his face (for his New York office had been clamoring persistently for "more news"), took the precious papers, slowly tore them into bits, and tossed them into the glowing fireplace.

"Nothing like that around here," he said. "If our papers print more news about the sinking of ships than the other papers do, our crime'll stand out like a sore thumb. The better a code is, the more dangerous it is."

THE FIRST SEAL IS THAT OF THE FRENCH ARMY CENSOR, THE SECOND THAT OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN THE FIELD, AND THE THIRD A BRITISH PRESS BUREAU SEAL.

IT IS the personal equation in censorship that has made the institution so difficult to systematize and regulate. That single individual with his blue pencil, his fears and whims, and his personal outlook on life, can not always be analyzed.

In a little château at Goritzia, on the Austro-Italian front, not many months ago, the Austrian staff-officers gave an

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after-dinner concert for a few correspondents. The staff-officer who acted as censor was not a music-lover and he departed from the gathering before the program was ended. The finale was an "Ave Maria," exquisitely played by piano, cello, and several violins, and the effect was highly sentimental. The next day one of the correspondents, writing of the concert, told how thoughts of home and loved ones had come over the war-bound officers as they had listened to the strains of the beautiful old air. He wrote that "chins dropped to chests and heads were bowed, in contemplation and reverie, while the cannon boomed out above the sad music."

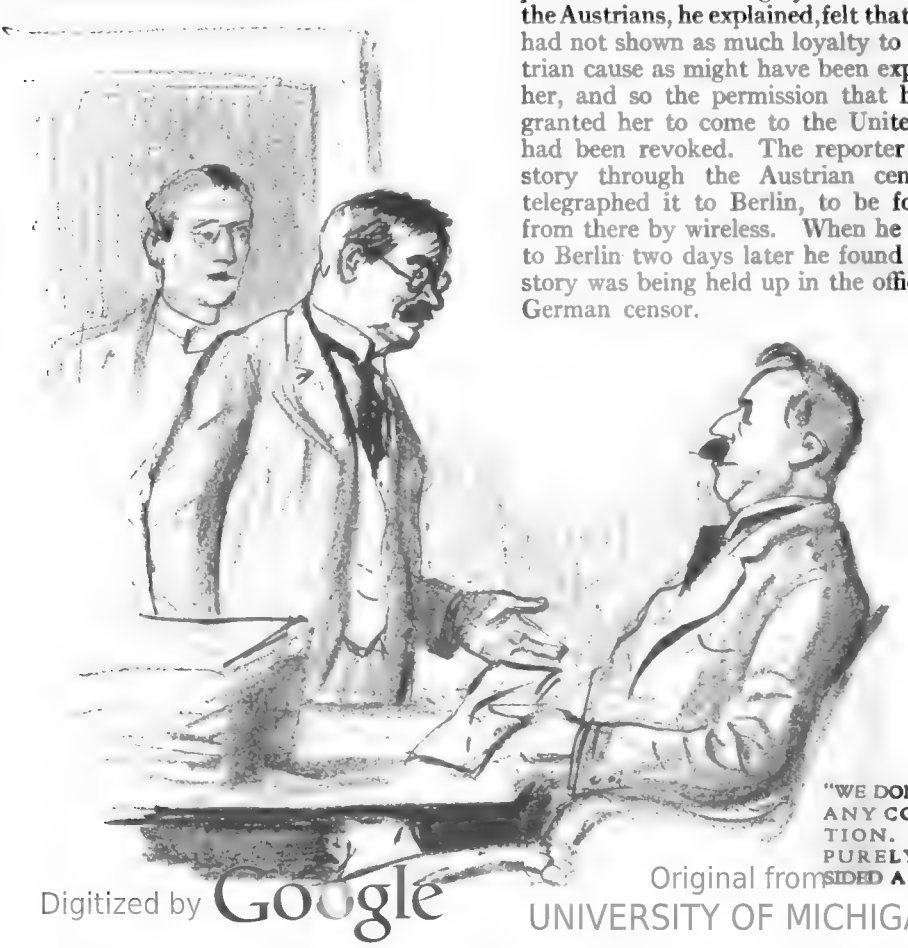
"No 'chins dropped to chests' in that crowd," said the non-music-loving censor, as he read the story. "I don't want the world to think that Austrian officers ever feel sad." And his blue pencil cut out every reference to the sweet spell which the music, amid the sound of guns, had thrown over the Austrian leaders.

Very often the personal pride of a censor in his ability to read and write a foreign language will appear in his work. A certain American correspondent, describing the spring flowers in the vicinity of the trenches, wrote of anemones, violets, and "john-quills." Evidently the misspelling hurt the French censor as much as it hurts an American reader, for, in a firm, aggressive script, he dashed out the offending word and wrote over it the letters, J-O-N-Q-U-I-L-S.

An Austrian censor, when I wrote the word "worshipper," cut out one "p." The dictionary discloses that we were both right, as the word is a variant.

Cub-censors will invariably thrust forward their personal opinion in their work.

"Go to Vienna and discover why the Austrians will not permit Emmy Destinn to come to the United States," was an assignment which an American correspondent in Berlin received some time ago from his New York office. The correspondent complied and secured a highly interesting story: the Austrians, he explained, felt that Destinn had not shown as much loyalty to the Austrian cause as might have been expected of her, and so the permission that had been granted her to come to the United States had been revoked. The reporter put the story through the Austrian censor and telegraphed it to Berlin, to be forwarded from there by wireless. When he returned to Berlin two days later he found that the story was being held up in the office of the German censor.



"WE DON'T NEED ANY COOPERATION. THIS IS PURELY A ONE-SIDED AFFAIR."

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"What's the matter with that story?" he demanded of the censor who had held it. "The Austrian censors passed it all right."

"Well, they were wrong in doing it," said the censor. "You're painting this woman as a martyr."

"Give me the copy," said the reporter. He took it to the office of Count George Wedel, the chief censor, a patron of music in Germany, and related his troubles.

"Why, the —— fool," said Count Wedel. "Every person in the United States who loves music has a right to know why Destinn isn't singing to them this year." And he permitted the story to pass.

Later investigation disclosed that the man who had stopped the story was acting as a temporary censor and had been on the job only two days.

In the days of the enmity between correspondents and censors, when life was one long fight between them, Karl H. von Wiegand, the noted Berlin correspondent, achieved, perhaps, the biggest defeat of the censorship that will be recorded in the war. It is not generally known that von Wiegand's interview with the Crown Prince of Germany had to be smuggled out of the country. Von Wiegand reached the Crown Prince through unofficial channels and, after talking with him for several hours, returned to Berlin and wrote his story, in his office at 77 Zimmerstrasse. Before many hours had elapsed angry officialdom learned that von Wiegand had talked with the Crown Prince without its permission and was writing a story about the visit.

The censor of the Foreign Office sent to von Wiegand's office demanding that the story be turned over to the censor. Von Wiegand refused and said that he would not discuss the matter with any less person than the chief censor himself. As soon as the censor had left his office von Wiegand hired a courier and started him on his way to Holland with the story. The courier got through, and when von Wiegand learned that the story had safely reached London he took a copy of the interview to the Foreign Office and submitted it, saying, "You may cut this copy as you like. My story is on the way to the United States by this time."

VERY often the censors themselves did not know their own aims. Great crises of the war, arising suddenly, sometimes upset them. The censorship jumble about the first raid on London is as good an illustration of the early-war irregularities of censorship as can be found.

The British, let me say, are inclined to put a correspondent on his honor; or, at least, they are inclined to let him go as far as he wants to and then expect him to suffer whatever punishment he brings to himself, if he goes too far. On the night of September 8, 1915, a Zeppelin, hovering over London, gave the city its first taste of death from the skies. The Zeppelin had hardly disappeared before the Press Bureau sent word to all the newspapers and to the American and other correspondents that they were not even to SUBMIT to the censor any stories of the raid, much less PUBLISH or CABLE them. The Press Bureau then sent out a short, formal statement, saying that a Zeppelin had visited the eastern counties.

Bursting with our stories, we American reporters found it impossible to contain ourselves. Several of us did SUBMIT stories, and I have heard that several correspondents were threatened with punishment for having done so. I was among those who gave a story to the censor. I wrote that story, weighing every word, just as the censor would weigh it. I did not give localities; I did not tell what the Zeppelin had done to London, but what it had done to the minds of London people. London had been brave—and I said so; London had got mad, instead of scared, and recruiting began to jump that very evening—and I said that, too. And, twenty-four hours later, to my great delight, I learned by cable from New York that my Zeppelin-raid story had gone through and had been the only story to reach New York. I attribute my success with that story to the fact that I put myself in an Englishman's place and wrote the story as he would have written it.

I got over a second story about the raid the next day. I had an engagement to interview Marconi the morning after the raid; I had planned to ask him questions about the use of wireless in the war. When I entered his office I found him sleepy and fagged.

"I was up until an unearthly hour this morning," he said.

"Did you chase the Zeppelin?" I asked.

"Everywhere!" he exclaimed. "I got

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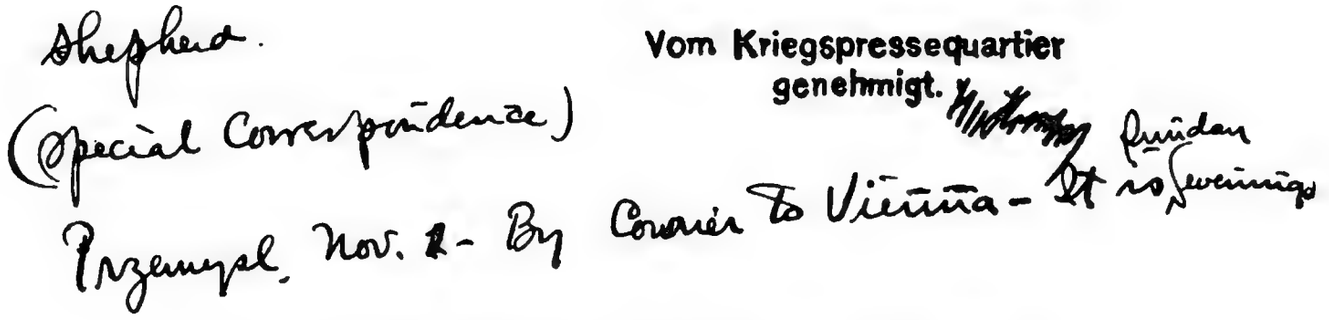

THE SIGNATURE OF AN AUSTRIAN CENSOR AT PRZEMYSL.

a taxicab, and I went to all the fires and I saw all the horrible sights."

"Mr. Marconi," I said, "you and Count Zeppelin are the two most picturesque inventors of this century. Will you tell me, for publication, what you think of the work of your fellow inventor, from what you saw last night?"

"Thank God," said Marconi, ardently, "they can't use my invention to kill women and children, as they used Zeppelin's last night. If I were Zeppelin I would demand of my emperor that he cease the use of my invention for such terrible purposes."

There was my Zeppelin-raid story. In Marconi's own words I cabled a description of the fires and deaths in the heart of London. And not a word was changed by the censor; it was the kind of a story, I think, that the censor would have liked to send out himself.

An interesting sidelight on censorship, as it affects the British newspapers, grew out of the Zeppelin raid. The Zeppelin passed almost directly over the office of the London *Times*, the most famous newspaper in Christendom. From the windows of the *Times* the reporters and editors saw, enacted all about them, the biggest newspaper story that ever broke in London. And yet they did not dare to publish a word of it!

Two weeks later the Zeppelin-raid story which I had sent to New York reached London, in the American newspapers, and was discovered by Fred Wile, of the London *Daily Mail*. Rushing to the *Mail* office in a taxicab, Wile sent the story out to the composing room, and it appeared the next morning; it was the first story, aside from official statements, that was printed in London about the raid. Later in the day the staid old *Times*, over whose very roof and about whose very walls the thing had actually happened, telephoned to Mr. E. L. Keen, manager of the United Press in London, saying:

"We're very sorry you didn't give us that London raid story from New York. When you get any stories like that, hereafter, please give us a chance at them."

The *Times* men could have written a story that would have excelled mine; they had witnessed the chief events of the raid, and I had not. But my story possessed the invaluable advantage of having been passed upon by the censor and thereby having been rendered "safe." Neither literary merit nor actual news was what the *Times* liked in the story: it was its "safeness" that appealed to them.

THE hit-or-miss system of censorship was bound to be improved, as the war went on. Each nation of Europe was willing and, indeed, anxious, to keep the newspaper correspondents from neutral countries in a happy frame of mind. Field officers, Foreign Office officials, and men of other departments of government did their best to please the correspondents, and they soon discovered that one unreasonable censor could undo all their efforts to make correspondents feel at home.

Sir Stanley Buckmaster, later the Lord Chief Justice, became the chief censor in England, after the war had been going on for some months. It was all a new game to him, and he frankly confessed, in the presence of correspondents, that he didn't fully understand it.

"I think," he said, "this very minute, I know every secret of the British army and the British navy. I suppose some of these secrets would be worth thousands of pounds to me, if I were a spy and if I were able to get them to the Germans within a short time. Just for fun, the other evening, one of the censors and I tried to figure out just how we could help the Germans with the

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information we had. There wasn't a way we could have made one penny, as spies, for owing to the censorship it would have been impossible for us to get a single fact to the Germans quickly enough to make the information of any value. I know the censorship is pretty hard on you newspaper men, now and then, and perhaps it is harder because we don't fully understand how to work it; but you've no idea how necessary an iron-clad censorship really is in war time."

It has been such straightforward talk as this from censors that has helped the successful American correspondent in Europe to get the censor's view-point.

THE censorship which the twentieth-century war correspondent faces today is a new, twentieth-century sort.

In all the warring countries, except Italy, which is ridden with suspicion, correspondents now have an opportunity to appeal against the censor's blue pencil.

In Germany the American correspondents were all under parole, having given their word of honor that they would not send one written word out of Germany that had not first been submitted to the censor, and that they themselves would not leave the country, at any time, without the permission of the Government.

In return for this promise they were granted the right to appeal from the censor who had cut their story to Baron von Radowitz, censor in-chief. And, further, they may appeal from him to the Foreign Office in extreme cases of disagreement.

One eminently fair rule of the German censorship in latter times was that a copy of the correspondent's story showing all the changes which had been made in it should be sent to him as soon as possible after the censoring is completed.

The Allies also have the same rule. The correspondents in London and Paris may go to the censor's office at any time and learn what changes, if any, have been made in their dispatches.

It ought to be a matter of pride to American army officials that the censorship rules of the American army are followed faithfully in Germany and Austria and, to some extent, in England and France. For this reason American correspondents in Europe these days are able to make little complaint against censorship regulations.

THE campaign of the Allies in Macedonia, a year ago, saw the last of the unparoled, uncredentialed war correspondent. The correspondents who were in Salonica dodged credentials as long as they could. We learned that those highly-prized documents for which we begged in the early days of the war were, in reality, millstones about our necks.

When General Sarrail seized the consulates of the Central Powers in Salonica, after the first Austrian aeroplane raid on the town, there were a few of us uncredentialed correspondents who were able to dash to the telegraph-office and send out to the world the story of the latest sensational turn in Greece. But there was a large number of other correspondents—those who bore credentials and had the dignity of official assignment to the British-French expedition — who were forced to find an English censor and get him to put his O. K. on their stories before they could take them to the cable-office. Our stories often beat theirs by many hours.

But we were all sifted out, at last. Those of us who remained in Greece were forced to accept credentials and give parole that all stories would be submitted to the

"AMERICA IS THE CONSCIENCE OF THE WORLD; ALL THE REST OF US HAVE GONE MAD."

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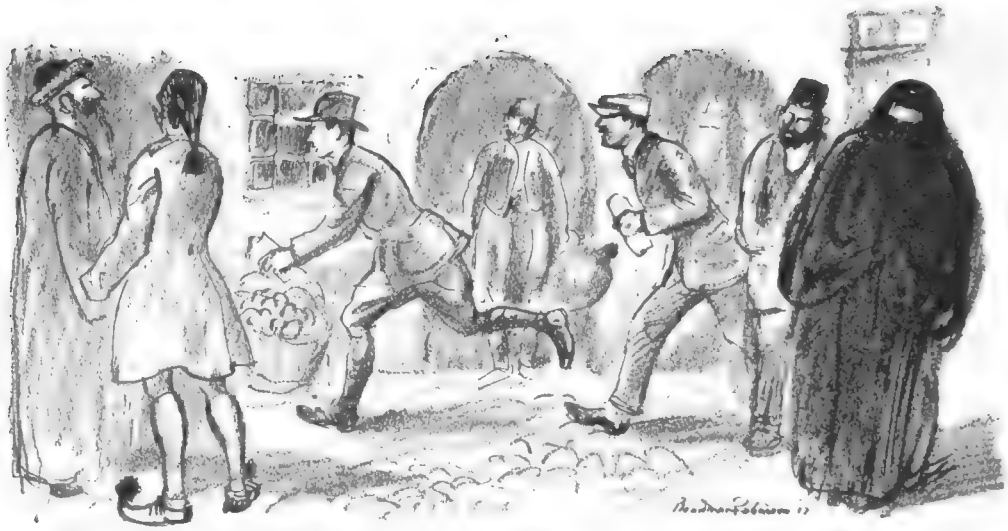

WE DASHED TO THE TELEGRAPH OFFICE AND SENT OUT THE STORY OF SALONICA'S RAID.

censor. And so in Greece passed the last of free-lance war corresponding in Europe.

The day of censor-fighting is over. We are all "good," now.

The censor tries to please us and we try to please him. As for the public, its children will perhaps be spanked in school, a hundred years from now, for not learning out of history books the facts which the European censors have not permitted American newspaper correspondents to send to America in this year of grace, 1917.

The situation does not please us any more than it pleases the newspaper and magazine reading public.

But there's nothing to be done about it. War is war.

"You seem to have arrived at the point where you sympathize with the censor," said one of the editors of this magazine, after reading certain parts of what I have written above.

I don't exactly sympathize with the censor. But I have seen enough of war to know that the side which dropped censorship would be immediately defeated on land and sea.

I don't sympathize with the censor, but, with most other American correspondents in Europe, I have got his viewpoint. We agree with him that his blue pencil is mightier than the forty-two-centimeter gun.

THE KNOT IN THE SKEIN

BY EDITH M. THOMAS

I WAS not very old
When, one day, I was given a skein of yarn to hold,
And my grandmother wound.
But whenever the thread to a certain place came round,
It snapped in two—
A knot in the skein—there was nothing that we could do!

I remember yet
My grandmother's words, though their sense I could not get—
I remember her eyes,
And the brooding look at once so bitter and wise:
"Folks were the same . . .
They broke, when around to the knot in their skein you came!"

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GETTING EVEN WITH GEO'GIA

A Johnnie Kelly Story

By Wilbur S. Boyer

ILLUSTRATED BY MAGINEL WRIGHT ENRIGHT

JOHNNIE KELLY was not correcting the girl's composition on his desk.

The other boys and girls of 7B read and scratched hieroglyphics on the six-by-nine sheets industriously, as became scholars with but two classes between them and graduation. Through the windows came the rumble and clang of the Amsterdam Avenue cars, the rattle of delivery-wagons, and the harsh warnings of auto horns.

Johnnie was contemplating the framed Sir Galahad who stood beside the Eastern coast of the United States above the front blackboards. He wondered if the knight was as uncomfortable in those tin pants as was Master Johnnie in his new stiff collar.

Between Friday afternoon and Monday morning a transformation had taken place in the appearance of Johnnie, 7B's new pupil, and no one realized it better than he.

"Ach, me Chancey Oilcott!" his mother had crowed as she pushed him out of the door at eight-twenty, "suit all oir-roned, dinky collar, red both ends—red head, red shoes—sure, ye'll make a hit wid the Manhattan gur-r-ruls this marnin', I'm thinkin'. Good luck to yez, me long-legged saint from the Bronix!"

This sally had sent him forth in a huff, but now as he contemplated himself he was agreeably impressed. Real polish certainly did make his tan shoes very, very red and attractive, sprawled out there in the aisle. Perhaps if he didn't have such long legs, or if he could wear long pants; if his coat sleeves would only grow as fast as his arms, and if this new collar were not so much like Sir Galahad's armor— Still, a guarded scrutiny of his classmates convinced him that he was, in outward appearance at least, as natty as they.

A burst of laughter from the girl across the aisle made Master Kelly jump. It also startled the class and brought the eyes of every youngster in the room upon the merry Miss Georgia.

"Well, Geo'gia!" exclaimed the teacher, even in the stress of the moment pronouncing her name as her Southern accent had corrupted it.

"Ah just couldn't help it, Mr. Parks," apologized the culprit, still laughing; and to Johnnie's horror she carried that young man's composition up to the teacher's desk.

Mr. Parks took the paper, and he laughed too; and while Johnnie's face became as red as his hair, the instructor read aloud:

"The skin is a layer of meet with holes in for perspuration and hairs which beautifies the complexion the body should have a certain amount of clothes a feller's skin should be

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"GOOD LUCK TO YEZ, ME LONG-LEGGED SAINT FROM THE BRONIX!"

washed daily or else dirt will get into the paws. It is a skin I got 0 per cent. in cinnamons."

A howl of delight from the class greeted this effusion. Jack Van Zarn laughed so heartily that Mr. Parks had to caution him, and Master Jack would have fared ill could Johnnie have laid hands on him at that instant.

It is not likely that Mr. Parks meant to hold Johnnie up to ridicule. Had he stopped to think, he probably would not have read the composition. But after all, the teacher was only a big boy; it sounded funny, and he wanted others to enjoy it with him. The last sentence, however, had a sting in it.

"Well, Kelly," said the teacher as the storm of merriment subsided, "I am pleased to see that you have used the apostrophe correctly, though it is unnecessary to make it as big as a comet. Now let us see why you were marked a failure in synonyms. Here is your paper:

"The difference between the Savegery and barberism are a Savager is one who lets his hair grow wild a barberism is one who shaves his dome all except one bush so his enemy can lift his roof."

Another wave of delight greeted the reading.

"Now, Master Kelly, though your English can not be said to be savage, it is certainly barbarous."

Johnnie had to write another composition; and most humiliating was the knowledge that Mr. Parks put the original in his pocket to show the other men teachers at noon.

Johnnie Kelly was not a ladies' man. He was at that stage where he considered girls beneath his notice. He found nothing attractive about them. They cried without cause, couldn't join in any real sport, and their presence in the room when the teacher was out always put a damper on things. Little had he dreamed, when Mr. Parks made him and Jack Van Zarn change seats this morning because Jack couldn't keep eyes from Geo'gia's golden braids, that the change meant disaster.

Against Mr. Parks he had no resentment. "He gimme what was comin' to me, all

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right, ALL right!" the boy soliloquized. But here was one of the despised sex who had made him the laughing-stock of the class. Though naturally good-natured and sunny, he was sensitive. He wanted to be one of this community in which he had spent the past week. He liked these companions better than the Frog Hollow gang. Several strenuous hours had he and his mother spent since Friday in making ready his Monday-morning toilet that it might be in keeping with that of his comrades; and now, when a chit of a girl—even if others did think her pretty—called attention to his linguistic peculiarities, he was bitterly resentful, for he quickly realized that it placed him on a low level in the estimation of both teacher and pupils.

Five minutes later, when the class had settled down and Mr. Parks had once more become engrossed in averaging marks for the month, Johnnie was able to voice his wrath under cover of the roar from the street below.

"Snitch!" he sneered as loudly as he dared. "Don't you think you put one over!—gettin' me laughed at by the whole class! If a feller'd done it, I'd—I'd—" As she was a girl, his tone was more reproving than threatening.

"Why, Johnnie," gasped the astonished maid, "Ah didn't think you-all 'ud care. Mr. Parks likes fun, and Ah reckoned you meant it for a good joke. You are always doing such funny things."

Her Southern drawl, her wide-open, deep-blue eyes, had no charm for the exasperated Johnnie. "A joke!" repeated the boy. "A joke? Hear me laugh: Ha, ha, ha!" There was certainly no merriment in his effort. It must have been louder than he thought, however, for Mr. Parks glanced around the class. Johnnie plunged his pen into the ink-well and almost put his nose on the composition paper before him in his effort to show attention to business.

The girl's tactics were quite different. She made no pretense of writing. Putting her elbows on the desk, she rested her chin on clasped hands and held her eyes just above Mr. Parks's head until his scowl traveled along the row to Johnnie and then to her, when she dropped her gaze, and allowed herself to be surprised into a most winning smile. If Johnnie's hunchback attitude had aroused teacher's suspicions, the little lady's beaming countenance made him forget. Daniel Parks smiled back at her and resumed his labors. Wise little maid!

Johnnie spoke more cautiously: "I tell you it ain't no joke when Parks calls a feller a barbarism. And you done it. Any boob would 'a' knowed I wasn't sweatin' to show him that last sentence. Only a skirt would 'a' done it."

"Ah reckon you-all are mad at me," observed Geo'gia, pouting ruefully.

"Yes, all o' me, you bet! You've give me a beaut of a throw-down with Mr. Parks, and I'm goin' to git square if I can think of a way to git even with a dame. If you was a feller, I'd—but you ain't," he wound up sadly.

A boy whose whole personality bubbles with fun finds it hard to make others take him seriously. In fact, his very voice and manner refuse to assume the attributes of anger. Sunny-haired Geo'gia gave vent to a subdued laugh. "Oh, Johnnie," she whispered, "you are so funny!"

The bell for classes to change rooms prevented Johnnie from framing any answer. During the remainder of the morning, as they traveled from history to grammar, from grammar to "gym," he ignored his enemy studiously. Every time he peeped at her she was eying him; and her face brightened, and she smiled.

He ransacked his brain for some way to get even. He thought of the many ways chewing-gum or ink might be used in schemes of vengeance, but discarded them all. His first week's experience in this school had taught him such tricks were taboo. He must find something to match that which she had brought upon him, and even a little more. He had been humiliated before the class; so must she be.

Lunch hour came and went, and Johnnie's campaign was still unplanned. In boyish spite, the teacher being out of the room, Johnnie wrote on the board, "Jack kissed Jorger."

And then the boy learned a surprising lesson in human nature: every boy and girl in the class turned and laughed at Geo'gia, while Van Zarn was not even noticed. Indeed, Jack laughed with the rest. The irate young lady jumped to the blackboard, wiped out the words, and completed retaliatory measures by dusting Master Kelly's newly pressed coat with the chalky board rubber until he looked like a miller. She

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stepped back to survey her handiwork, and out pealed her exasperating laugh.

"You-all are so funny, Johnnie," she chuckled, and Johnnie's momentary triumph lost all its pleasure. She seemed to be having a royal good time.

be very strict. Johnnie would sit beside Geo'gia with plenty of time to "get square," *if* he could devise some scheme.

One wild thought came into his head: if the mere accusation of being kissed produced such a sensation, what would be the

JOHNNIE PUT A FRECKLED HAND UNDER HER CHIN AND TILTED BACK HER HEAD.

Off came the jacket; and in the coat-closet, with Mr. Parks's clothes-brush, Johnnie managed to make the garment fairly presentable.

Mr. Parks came in late, and the news was whispered around that the teacher had a long report to make out and that classes would not change rooms for the afternoon. Johnnie grinned with satisfaction. He did not wish his teacher any hard luck, but the news meant that discipline would not

effect if she were actually smacked before the whole class? Brilliant thought! But who would do it? The boy shuddered. He, himself, certainly not! The very notion was appalling. It would be as much a punishment to him as to her.

He knew he would not be laughed at, but the act of kissing he could not stand. When his cousins and aunts and other numerous female relations came to visit and succeeded in cornering him to "slobber on" him,

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as he expressed it, Master Johnnie invariably sneaked away quickly to wash his face. No, Johnnie was not yet of the kissing age. As he was sure he could not bribe or induce any one else so to punish the irritating Miss Geo'gia, he gave up the idea.

Mr. Parks dictated an example—he must give the children something to keep them busy — but Johnnie was busy with his thoughts. He watched Geo'gia wrinkle her forehead and bite the end of her pencil. The boy was at his wits' ends.

"Kelly, your answer?" came the voice of the teacher.

"I ain't there yet, Mr. Parks," he stammered.

Amid the snickers of the rest of the class sounded clearly that of Geo'gia, and Johnnie hastened to say, "I mean I didn't understand the problem."

The pedagogue surveyed the boy critically. The man could see that something was wrong with Kelly; but that report was too pressing: he must finish it, though the class be neglected.

"Listen, then," said the teacher. "If I sell a house for $12,000 and lose twenty-five per cent., the $12,000 is three-fourths of the cost. If you know three-fourths of the cost, can you find the whole cost, Johnnie?"

"I wasn't payin' attention," Johnnie confessed, and flushed to the roots of his hair.

Geo'gia peeped at him slyly and winked. That settled it. If Johnnie could think up the most diabolical vengeance on earth—all except kissing; he was still not desperate enough for that—he would not hesitate to use it on the girl who gloated over his troubles.

The next problem found him ready: "A man sells two houses for $2,400 each. On one he loses twenty per cent., on the other he gains twenty per cent. Does he gain or lose by the whole transaction, and what per cent.?"

Johnnie's face brightened with an idea. In his former school he had had problems of that type until he was sick of them. If Mr. Parks would keep at them long enough, Master Kelly felt confident he could involve Miss Geo'gia in trouble. Let the young lady be caught *receiving* answers, or let Mr. Parks believe that she had stooped to *giving* answers—equally disgraceful according to the code—and deep enough would be her humiliation. True, it would involve Johnnie himself; but he determined to face anything. First, however, he must lull her suspicions thoroughly, else she would probably not take the bait he offered. Instead of figuring, he printed a note on his paper and held it up behind the back of the boy in the seat before him so that the girl could read:

"*The old skeeziks lost four per cent. and it surved him right for doing such a crazy stunt.*"

The maid smiled and shook her head dubiously. She wrote, "*No gain or loss.*"

While the rest of the class struggled with the example, Johnnie wrote again:

"*You're stung. Betcher Noah caught his kids with that egsample on the ark.*"

"Those who have 'No gain or loss,' stand!" commanded the instructor.

Geo'gia rose with half the class and wriggled her tongue at Johnnie with unconcealed delight.

"You are all wrong," declared Mr. Parks, relieving the force of his tone by a whimsical smile. The children dropped into their seats. "'Four per cent. loss' is correct. Those who have it, stand.—What! no one?"

Johnnie tried to grin and at the same time touch his nose with his tongue; but he did not rise. Geo'gia's knitted brows proved she was puzzled by her red-headed neighbor.

The teacher explained: "When he received $2,400 for one house, that was twenty per cent., or one-fifth, less than the cost of that house, or four-fifths of the cost. If $2,400 was four-fifths of the cost, one-fifth of the cost would be one-fourth of $2,400, and five-fifths, or the whole cost, would be five-fourths of $2,400, which is $3,000. The other $2,400 was six-fifths of the cost of the second house. Five-fifths, or the cost of that house, would be five-sixths of $2,400, or $2,000. He therefore paid $3,000 for one house, $2,000 for the other, or $5,000 for both and sold them for $2,400 plus $2,400, or $4,800. He lost $200. Class, gain or loss is reckoned on what?"

"The cost!" responded the class with much energy.

"On what?" he repeated pedagogically.

"The cost!" shouted forty throats with increased emphasis.

"Not quite so loud, please. I'm in the same room with you. Now, $200 on $5,000 is two-fiftieths of the cost, or four per cent loss." As the teacher explained, he put the figures on the board.

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"Oh," whispered Geo'gia as Mr. Parks turned to his desk to plan another problem, "you had it befo' and remembered the answer."

"Nope," Johnnie retorted, "I done it mental. Betcher dollar if he gives another like it I can tell you the answer with me arms folded."

"You can do all that in your head?" She pointed to the board.

Before he could answer, the next problem was given: "Mr. Doe sells two farms for $3,000 each. On one he realized a profit of twenty-five per cent. On the other he lost twenty-five per cent. What per cent. does he gain or lose?"

"Six and one-quarter loss," Johnnie whispered out of the corner of his mouth before most of the scholars could make a dozen figures.

Geo'gia was incredulous.

"*Betcher*," Johnnie printed.

Communication was indeed easy. Mr. Parks, fretting over a report on "Causes of non-promotion," was having trouble to separate adenoids from bad teeth.

Johnnie leaned over and repeated, "Betcher, betcher, betcher."

"Oh, keep quiet," she begged, without raising her eyes from her work; but there was a flush of pleasure on her cheeks. "Ah can't figure when you do that. Is the cost of the first $2,400?"

"Want me to feed you with a spoon?" asked Johnnie sarcastically; but inwardly he rejoiced. The young lady was falling into his trap. Oh, if Mr. Parks would only look up and catch her asking for help!

She managed to finish the problem, and the teacher asked her the answer.

"Six and one-quarter per cent. loss," replied the little Southerner, and she explained it satisfactorily.

In the counting of noses, Johnnie was again among the failures. He grinned and winked at Geo'gia and watched her expression as she viewed his paper, which had on it no figures except the answers. But there was another note:

"*Don't work so hard. Put down the answer and we ull talk.*"

"That would be cheating," she whispered as she sat down.

"No, it wouldn't," he replied. "You know how to work 'em now. I'll tell you the answer."

Mr. Parks's head bobbed up and conversation stopped.

"What would we talk about?" whispered the girl when opportunity offered.

Still another problem of the same kind was assigned, so Johnnie, without the least compunction, with all the guile of an experienced campaigner, wrote two answers at once:

"*You lose three and one-quarter per cent. I am going to talk about a angle.*"

"*What kind of angle?*" she wrote below her last example.

"*A white one of coarse I wouldnt rite nothing bad.*"

"*You mean* ANGEL."

"*I mean* YOU."

Geo'gia stuck her tongue out at him, but her eyes were shining, and she hurried to work the problem neglected during the correspondence. She hardly dared accept

WITH MR. PARKS'S CLOTHES-BRUSH JOHNNIE MADE THE JACKET FAIRLY PRESENTABLE.

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GEO'GIA SNATCHED A BOARD-RUBBER AND POWDERED JOHNNIE'S RED HEAD.

Johnnie's proposal in its entirety, though little did she surmise the perfidious plan of the now soft-speaking Kelly. She got the correct answer, with a small proportion of the class. Still Johnnie had no work on his paper.

"What's the matter?" Geo'gia whispered.

"Nothin'."

"You've told me the right answer every time. Get up next time."

It was a hard example. She got the wrong answer twice because she threw away fractions of a cent; but at length she verified Johnnie's. Mr. Parks took some time to work it.

"Those who have one and three-fifths per cent., stand."

Geo'gia stood. So did Johnnie. They were the only ones.

"Ah, Kelly," said the instructor, much delighted, "at last you have one. Explain."

Johnnie was tongue-tied.

"Let me see your work," commanded Mr. Parks.

"I haven't any," said Johnnie truthfully. He didn't want those notes read.

"How did you get your answer?" The smile was gone from the face of Daniel Parks.

Johnnie stared straight over the head of the teacher at the figure of Sir Galahad.

"Let me see yours," Mr. Parks ordered the horror-struck girl.

She obeyed promptly. With her Southern breeding she knew nothing else to do, whatever the result. All the work of the example was on her paper, and also the fatal notes:

"*What kind of angle?*"

"*You mean* ANGEL."

The teacher looked from one to the other of the culprits. A suppressed giggle struggled to voice the hilarity of thirty-eight youngsters.

"Johnnie," Mr. Parks began, "you are not quite civilized yet. A barbarian is one in the middle status of culture between savagery and civilization. If a savage had wanted that answer, he would have gone for it with a club. A barbarian disregards the customs of polite society. He may not be so strenuous; but if he wants anything, he uses rather crude methods to obtain it. Don't be a barbarian, Johnnie."

The speech cut deep, for the class enjoyed it. But Johnnie was nerved to stand it, as long as Geo'gia got her share.

"As for you, my little angel—or rather, Johnnie's angel—you are not a new scholar,

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and you fully know our standards on giving and receiving help. I can not tell you how much this hurts me. There must be some explanation."

Geo'gia was very pink. She tried to speak; her eyes were brimming with tears that she could not hold back. She looked at Johnnie, hopingly. Johnnie stared ahead and said nothing. His triumph had come; but somehow he felt contemptible. He gulped hard. For once in his life he found himself at a loss for words. And the girl, too overwrought to collect her wits, was also speechless.

And then the door opened to admit a boy with a note calling Mr. Parks to the room of the new lady teacher across the hall.

"I'll settle this case later," proclaimed the teacher. "Class, page 242, example sixteen." And he hastened out.

Hardly had the door closed before Geo'gia snatched an all-felt board rubber from the chalk rail, and amid laughing encouragement of "Go to it, angel!" from delighted classmates, she proceeded thoroughly to powder Johnnie's red head, winding up with a lusty, dusty wipe across the mouth. Down she sat and started to work example sixteen, while little Max Schuler kicked up his heels higher than his desk in his happy excitement, and even the most sedate young ladies in the class rocked with merriment.

Johnnie's feelings underwent a rapid change. He had been considering himself the meanest rascal in Manhattan, but her attack goaded him to the extreme. The girl must endure the most terrible punishment he could think of, though he himself died in the act. He rose deliberately and took a deep breath. He put a freckled hand under her chin and tilted back her head. The next instant a wild shout of glee went up from the spectators—to stop short, for Mr. Parks was standing in the doorway.

Even had he not witnessed the closing scene, there could have been no doubt in his mind as to what had happened. Tipped at a sharp angle across Geo'gia's trembling lips was a replica in chalk of Johnnie's mouth, and a white spot as big as a dime showed where his nose had touched. Without this, there was circumstantial evidence in the fact that Johnnie Kelly's face was bent low over his desk, and he was the only boy busy with example sixteen.

Mr. Parks contemplated the pair for some time, struggling to keep from laughing. "I'll see both of you at three o'clock. Kelly, wipe off your face and take a seat in the last aisle."

To the shamefaced miss he said nothing, but directed the giggling girls to locate for her the telltale chalk. Judging by her expression, she would have preferred a good scolding.

Happiness was not Johnnie's portion. He wore no smile the rest of the afternoon. He ignored the whispered taunts from Max and Victor and Jack and a dozen others. Even the brazen Jack's question, "Hey, barbarian, how's your angel?" failed to get a rise out of the Irish lad. He was too low-spirited to resent anything.

At three, he and Geo'gia remained.

"Work this problem, both of you," directed the teacher: "I sell two factories for $36,500 each, gaining ten per cent. on one, losing ten per cent. on the other. What per cent. do I gain or lose on the——"

"You lose one per cent.," interrupted Johnnie.

Mr. Parks worked it out. In three minutes and thirty seconds he threw back his head. "By George!" he exploded.

With a superior air, the boy looked over his teacher's shoulder. "You're right; try another," said he condescendingly.

They tried several, and Johnnie never took longer than twenty seconds.

"How do you do it?" Mr. Parks was obliged to ask.

"Well," said Johnnie, scratching his head, "I don't know why it is, but no matter what sum of money you give, if you multiply the two per cents. together it will give you the per cent. of the answer, and it's always a loss. It won't work if you use a different per cent. for the gain from the one for a loss."

For fifteen minutes Mr. Parks did problems and cudgeled his brain to figure out the why; but perhaps he was rusty in his higher mathematics, for he had to give it up. In the meanwhile, Johnnie supervised his teacher's work paternally, and Geo'gia kept her eyes on the floor.

"It's so," the teacher admitted. "Then she did not show you the answer? Come, you are holding something back, both of you. Tell me about it."

"I told her the answers," confessed the boy, "but she done all the figurin'." He was not proud of his work now. "She got

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me in trouble this morning, you know, and I wanted to git even."

Then the young miss blazed out: "He's just as mean as he can be, Mr. Parks. Won't you please make him stop? Ah just want him to let me alone, and Ah'm sure Ah'll never bother him any mo'. He's—he's a bar-bar-barbarian, that's what he is."

"I ain't no barbarian, neither," protested Johnnie, appealing to Mr. Parks. "You don't think I kissed her because I wanted to, do yer?" It was with an injured air, respectful, even eager for a denial.

Daniel Parks caught his breath. It took him several seconds to adjust himself to the attitude of a thirteen-year-old boy of Johnnie's type toward the subject of osculation.

"Kelly"—he must end the thing quickly or he would laugh in the faces of the two rueful youngsters—"I shall change your seat, and I want you to promise me never to annoy Geo'gia again."

"Sure," responded Johnnie, "I'm sorry I kissed her. I was so hoppin' mad I didn't care what I done. I don't like any one makin' fun o' my talkin', Mr. Parks. I can't talk no better. But I played her a fierce trick, and I'll never kiss her no more."

"I'm sure neither Geo'gia nor I will hold you up to ridicule, Johnnie, hereafter, if you don't invite it. Get your hat and go home now."

As Master Kelly disappeared down the staircase, three steps at a time, one hand trying to loosen that abominable collar from his throat, Geo'gia dropped into a seat, her head on her arm, and broke into tears.

"Now, don't cry," protested the teacher; "he will not annoy you any more. He'll do just what I told him to do."

"Tha—that's just it," sobbed the maid. 'Nun—now he'll never speak to me again!"

And Mr. Daniel Parks sank helplessly into his chair.

"One Week of Kelly," published last month, and "Getting Even with Geo'gia" introduced a new name into magazine fiction. Mr. Wilbur S. Boyer is a school-teacher, and proud of it. He knows Johnnie Kelly, because he has taught him, scolded him, punished him, loved him. There will be other stories about Johnnie Kelly in later numbers.

THE FATHER

BY THEODOSIA GARRISON

WE WERE such friends, such lovers, she and I,
No door closed ever between mind and mind;
And surely I shall love him by and by,
This tiniest rival of all humankind.

Perhaps no man may ever understand
The woman's brooding o'er the child she bore;
Yet strange it is that such a little hand
Should close so great a door.

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·H·S·V·U·S·

FOR THE SPREAD OF THE WYOMING IDEA

GREAT DAYS FOR THE AMERICAN BOY

IN MR. AMERICAN BOY—His Book, volume entitled H. S. V. U. S., the future chronicler will have to devote an entire chapter to the month of January, 1917. We gladly hand down to him what will be the big job of estimating all that that month meant for Young America, and, like the contemporaries of the Boston Tea Party, we leave him these impressions of these events in which we feel honored at having participated.

Though Mr. American Boy will probably not be likely to remember January twenty-ninth most vividly, it was, nevertheless, a day to be set down in his annals as significant and memorable. Captain Steever, with his staff of assistants, had come to Culver, which had been designated by Secretary Baker as his temporary headquarters. From there he was to go out upon the great work to which he had dedicated himself.

Captain Steever invited those who are charged with the interests of the high-school boys of the Middle West to come to a conference at the Culver Military Academy, Culver, Indiana—the first general conference on the Wyoming Idea.

Forty-eight delegates came, representing twenty-three cities of seven states. Their interest visibly deepened into conviction as they met the full force of Captain Steever's enthusiasm, and saw the Culver boys go through the various features of the Wyoming Tournament and the exhibition of Rough Riding by the Black Horse Troop. The files of strong, lithe, alert gray-clad Academy boys, swinging together through the precise movements of the drill, working together in the excitement of the wall-scaling competition, thinking together in the problems of the War Map Game, thrilled them with a vision of a new American manhood, strong, just, and loyal.

The upshot of the spontaneous enthusiasm aroused in the several meetings at which the work was thoroughly discussed was that the conference took a step which will insure the Wyoming Idea a permanent place in the lives of a greater number of present and future American boys. It was the delegate of the Louisville Boys' High School who put the almost unanimous feeling of the gathering into words:

"I feel that this meeting will be of historical significance, and that the subject we are discussing is of such vital importance that we should crystallize the sentiment that has been expressed here to-night."

An association, of which the high-school men present were made charter members, was begun that evening. Its work will be to study the problems and further the interests of military training in the high schools of the country that are daily responding to the new call of the American boy and introducing the Wyoming plan. This step will mean much for H. S. V. U. S.

Every High-School Volunteer may now count on the backing and sympathy of a body of enthusiastic school authorities—of which the nucleus will be the little group that returned from Culver organized to lend their knowledge and enthusiasm to the H. S. V. U. S. in its work of spreading and developing the Wyoming Idea. It will mean that the H. S. V. U. S. will be able to go on more rapidly with its work of binding the high-school boys of the country into one great brotherhood for the development of patriotism and manhood, leaving economic and educational details in the hands of school authorities equipped to handle them.

It will mean that H. S. V. U. S. hereafter will be more clearly than ever an organization of, by, and for Mr. American Boy, with the purpose of bringing the Wyoming Idea to all his fellow Young Americans.

But the full meaning of this step to him is best shown by the way he greeted the final

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BOYS OF THE AUSTIN HIGH SCHOOL, CHICAGO, RESPONDING TO CAPTAIN STEEVER'S CHALLENGE.

coming of Captain Steever to Chicago and a dozen other cities of the Middle West, during this same month.

Everywhere Captain Steever struck this note: The school authorities had done their share in giving them him and the Wyoming Idea. The rest was up to the boys. "This is a man's game you're going to play," he told the boys of Austin High in Chicago, "a real game that takes a stout heart. You're going to compete with other schools. You'll have to buy your own uniforms. You're going to drill, you're going to be reviewed in competition. Each round shoulder, each man out of step, will count against you. Can you do it?"

His challenge met with hearty response; and in the other schools of Chicago, where he spoke, as well as in Denver, Kansas City, Rockford, Elgin, Freeport, Oak Park, Waukegan, Blue Island, Streator, Joliet, Ottawa, where his assistants spoke, the response was the same.

If this response means anything, it means that when the work is in full sway there will be about twenty thousand new High School Volunteers in the Middle West. In Chicago alone Captain Steever estimates that if the present spirit of cooperation continues, about ten thousand will march under the banners of H. S. V. U. S. in review at the games he plans to hold in the near future.

To emphasize Captain Steever's challenge that this is Mr. American Boy's own movement, the old plan of having the school-cadet corps affiliate with the H. S. V. U. S. entire by action of the school authorities has been abandoned, and every boy taking training under the Wyoming plan, or a form of it, may receive the bronze button of the H. S. V. U. S. as an individual, upon pledging his allegiance to the Wyoming Idea and applying at headquarters.

EVERYBODY'S wants to cooperate with any effort to give every high-school boy in the United States this training for strength and manliness, courage and cleanness, that lies in the Wyoming Idea, and to unite all into one great band of Young Americans, representing all that is best in the life and hopes of our country.

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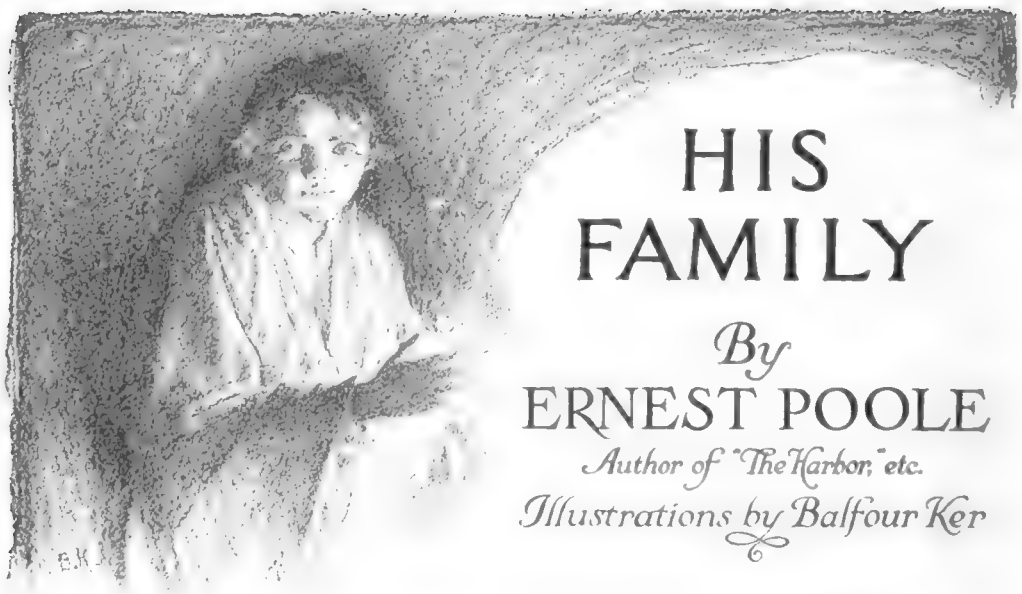

HIS FAMILY

By
ERNEST POOLE
Author of "The Harbor," etc.
Illustrations by Balfour Ker

THIS is the story of a man and his three daughters in the midst of a great modern city and its problems. Roger Gale's wife died when the children were little, and for sixteen years he has lived shut up within himself, not sharing in his daughters' interests. Now, nearly sixty, he is again awake, and eager to understand these three grown-up women of his household. His eldest daughter, Edith, is wrapped up in her family—an intensely maternal type of woman, whose devotion to her children shuts out the rest of the world. The second, Deborah, is the superintendent of a great public school, working out on modern lines a union between school and community. The youngest, Laura, a beauty, devotes her whole mind to pleasure. She marries a man as pleasure-loving, as much a speeder and a spender, as herself.

Presently Roger begins to get acquainted with "Deborah's big family"—her great school and the crowded foreign community of which it is the center. One result is that he takes into his office, and later into his home, one of Deborah's "boys"—a cripple, Johnny Geer. Near the close of school, Deborah collapses under the strain of her intense life, and Allan Baird, her physician, tells Roger her trouble is—motherhood on a new, large scale: three thousand children on her mind.

During the next year it is clear that Baird and Deborah are in love; but Deborah fears a home of her own will lessen her devotion to the big service she has undertaken for the tenement children. Baird, willing to wait, opens a clinic in connection with Deborah's school, and works with her. Toward the end of the year the Board of Education approves Deborah's experiment and even extends it. Not long after, reassured by success, she consents to marry Baird.

Then, one evening after a theatre, before Edith's eyes, her husband is hit by an automobile, and fatally injured. After his death, Edith learns that there is almost no money, and that after their summer in the mountains she and the children must live with Roger. On Edith's account Deborah's marriage is postponed, and when the war breaks out it is put off still further: for Deborah, at her post in the tenements, strains every nerve, devotes all her resources to help solve the terrible unemployment problem. Meantime Roger's business has been hard hit, but under Deborah's urging he keeps on, at a loss, for the sake of his employees. Only Laura's husband prospers, enriched by traffic in munitions.

Presently, too, Laura brings her troubles home. Her husband has started suit for divorce. After a terrible time, Deborah and her father accept the situation on the best terms possible, keeping the worst facts from Edith. But finally Edith, urging Laura to return to her husband, finds out the truth; and Laura, unable to endure her sister's bitter reproaches, leaves for Rome with the man whom she expects to marry.

Meanwhile the financial pressure increases in Roger's business and in his household; and the strain of unemployment grows worse in Deborah's school. Edith, forced to give up luxuries for her family, sharply resents Deborah's spending money on "tenement children."

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Deborah, with real suffering under her eyes all the time, in turn resents Edith's selfish concentration on her own family.

There is constant tension, and Roger, torn between the two, can do no more than purchase a brief truce by selling his precious collection of old rings.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

Baby Bruce Precipitates a Crisis

THERE came a season of sleet and rain when the smaller children were shut indoors and it was hard to keep them amused. They did not look well, and Edith was worried. She had always dreaded the spring, and to carry her family safely through she had taken them all, in former years, to Atlantic City for two weeks. That, of course, was impossible now. Trouble was bound to come, she thought. And it was not long in coming. Bobby, who was ten years old and went to school with his brother George, caught a wretched cold one day. Edith popped him into bed, but despite her many precautions the cold became grippe and spread through the house. The three smaller boys were all in bed.

"Suppose I ask Allan to come to-night?" Deborah suggested. "He's wonderful with children, you know."

Edith curtly accepted his services. She felt he had been proposed to forestall her getting Doctor Lake. But she said nothing. She would wait. Through long, hard days and longer nights she slaved upstairs. All Deborah's proffers of aid she declined. She kept Elizabeth home from school to help her with the many meals, the medicines, and the endless task of keeping her lively patients in bed. She herself played with them by the hour, while the ache in her head was a torment. At night she was up at the slightest sound. Heavy circles came under her eyes. Within a few days her baby, Bruce, had developed pneumonia.

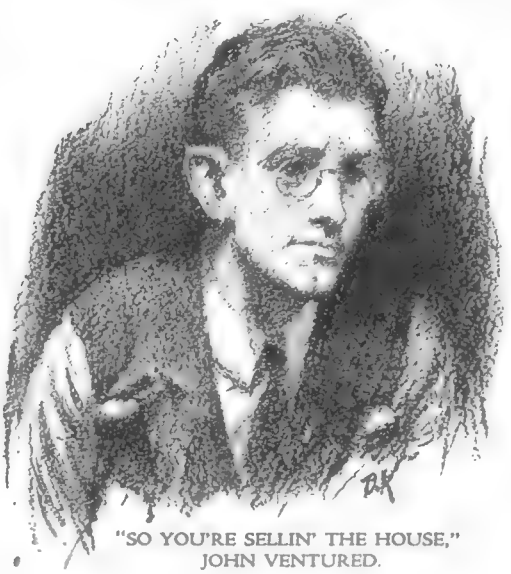
That evening after dinner, while Deborah was sitting with Roger in the living-room, she heard her sister coming down-stairs. She listened acutely, and glancing around she saw that Roger was listening too. Edith passed the doorway and went on down the hall. They heard her voice at the telephone. Then she came back and looked in at the door.

"I've called Doctor Lake," she said. "I've just taken Bruce's temperature. It's a hundred and five and two-fifths."

Deborah glanced up with a start. "Oh, Edith," she said softly.

Her sister turned and looked at her. "I ought to have had him before," she said. "When he comes, please bring him right up to the room." And she hurried up-stairs.

"Pshaw!" breathed Roger anxiously. He had seen Bruce an hour ago; and the sight of the tiny boy, so exhausted and so still, had given him a sudden scare. Could it be that *this* would happen now? Roger rose and walked the floor. Edith was right, he told himself; they should have had this man Lake before. And they would have, by George, if it had not been for Deborah's interference! He glanced at her indignantly.



"SO YOU'RE SELLIN' THE HOUSE," JOHN VENTURED.

Bringing in Allan Baird to save money, eh? Well, it was just about time they stopped saving money on their own flesh and blood! What had Bruce to do with tenement babies? But he had had tenement treatment—just that! Deborah had had her way at last with Edith's children, and now one of them might pay with its life! Again Roger glared at his silent daughter. And now, even in his excited state, he noticed how still and rigid she was, how unnatural the look she bent on the book held tightly in her hands.

Still Deborah said nothing. She could feel her father's anger. Both he and Edith

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held her to blame. She felt herself in a position where she could not move a hand. She was stunned, and could not think clearly. A vivid picture was in her mind, vivid as a burning flame that left everything else in darkness. It was of Bruce, one adorable baby, fighting for life. "What would I do if he were mine?"

When the doctor arrived she took him up-stairs and then came down to her father.

"Well?" he demanded.

"I don't know. We'll have to wait." And they both sat silent for a long time. At last they heard a door open and close, and presently steps coming down the stairs.

Roger went out into the hall: "Come right in here, doctor, won't you? I want to hear about this myself."

"Very well, sir." And Lake entered the room, with Edith close behind him. He took no notice of any one else. "Write this down," he said to her, "and give it to the nurse when she comes." A heavy man of middle age, with curious dark, impassive eyes that at times showed an ironic gleam, Lake was a despot in a world of mothers to whom his word was law. He was busy to-night, with no time to waste, and his low, harsh voice rattled out orders which Edith wrote down in feverish haste—an hourly schedule, night and day. He named a long list of things needed at once. "Night nurse will be here in an hour," he ended. "Day nurse to-morrow, 8 A. M. Get sleep yourself and plenty of it. As it is, you're not fit to take care of a cat."

Abruptly he turned and left the room. Edith followed. The street door closed, and in a moment after that his motor was off with a muffled roar. Edith came back, picked up her directions, and turned to her sister:

"Will you go up and sit with Bruce? I'll telephone the druggist," she said.

Deborah went to the sick-room. Bruce's small face, peaked and gray in the soft, dim light, turned as she entered and came to the bed.

"Well, dear?" she whispered.

The small boy's eyes, large and heavy with fever, looked straight up into hers. "Sick," said the baby hoarsely. The next instant he tossed up his hands and went through a spasm, trying to breathe. It passed, he relaxed a little, and again stared solemnly up at his aunt. "Sick," he repeated. "Wery sick."

Deborah sat silent. The child had another fight for his breath; and this time as he did so Deborah's body contracted too. A few moments later Edith came in. Deborah returned down-stairs, and for over an hour she sat by herself. Roger was in his study; Betsy and George had gone to bed. The night nurse arrived and was taken up-stairs. Still Deborah's mind felt numb and cold. Instinctively again and again it kept groping toward one point: "If I had a baby as sick as that, what would I do? What would I do?"

WHEN the door-bell rang again, she frowned, rose quickly, and went to the door. It was Allan.

"Allan, come in here, will you?" she said, and he followed her into the living-room.

"What is it?" he inquired.

"Bruce is worse."

"Oh, I'm sorry. Why didn't Edith let me know?"

"She had Lake to-night," said Deborah.

He knitted his brows in annoyance, then smiled. "Well, I don't mind that," he replied. "I'm rather glad. She'll feel easier now. What did he tell her?"

"He seemed to consider it serious, by the number of things he ordered."

"Two nurses, of course——"

"Yes, day and night." Deborah was silent a moment. "I may be wrong," she continued, "but I still feel sure the child will live. But I know it means a long, hard fight. The expense of it all will be heavy."

"Well?"

"Whatever it is, I'll meet it," she said. "Father can't; he has reached the end. But even if he could help still, that wouldn't make much difference in what I've been deciding." A tremor came into her deep, sweet voice. "Because when I was with Bruce to-night I saw just as clear as I see you now that if I had a child like that—as sick as that—I'd sacrifice anything—everything — schools, tenement children, thousands! I'd use the money that should have been theirs, and the time and all the attention! I'd shut them all out—they could starve if they liked! I'd be like Edith—exactly! I'd center on this one child of mine!"

Deborah turned her eyes to his, stern and gleaming with her pain. And she continued sharply: "But I don't mean to shut those children out! And that's why it's clear as day to me that I can't ever marry you! That baby to-night was the finishing stroke!"

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She made a quick, restless movement. Baird leaned slowly forward. Her hands in her lap were clenched together. He took them both and held them hard.

"No, this isn't clear," he said. "I can feel it in your hands. This is nerves. This is the child up-stairs. This is Edith in the house. This is school, the end of the long winter's strain."

"No, this is what I've decided!"

"But this is the wrong decision," Allan answered steadily.

"It's made!"

"Not yet, it isn't, not to-night. We won't talk of it now—you're in no condition."

Deborah's wide, sensitive lips began to quiver suddenly: "We *will* talk of it now, or never at all! I want it settled—done with! I've had enough—it's killing me!"

"No," was Allan's firm reply, "in a few days things will change. Edith's child will be out of danger, your other troubles will clear away!"

"But what of next winter, and the next? What of Edith's children? Can't you see what a load they are on my father? Can't you see he's aging fast?"

"Suppose he dies," Baird answered. "That will leave them all on your hands. You'll have *these* children, won't you, whether you marry or whether you don't! And so will I! I'm their guardian!"

"That won't be the same," she cried, "as having children of our own——"

"Look into my eyes." His voice was low.

"I'm looking—" Her eyes were bright with tears.

"Why are you always so afraid of becoming a mother?" Allan asked. "It's this obsession in your mind that you'll be a mother like Edith. And that's absurd! You never will! You love me, I'm quite sure of that; but what are you trying to do to-night? Throw me over for your school! You say you're afraid of not keeping school the first thing in your life! But you always do and you always will! You're putting it ahead of me now!"

"Yes, I can put it ahead of *you!* But I couldn't put it ahead of *my child!*" He winced at that, and she noticed it. "Because you are strong, and the child would be weak! The child would be like Bruce to-night!"

"Are you sure if you marry you must have a child?"

She looked at him steadily for a time. "Yes," she answered huskily, "if I married you I'd want a child. And that want in me would grow and grow until it made both of us wretched. I'm that kind of a woman. That's why my work has succeeded so far — because I've a passion for children! They're not my work; they're my very life!" She bowed her head, her mouth set hard. "But so are you," she whispered. "And now that this is settled, Allan, what do you think? Shall we try to go on—working together side by side, seeing each other every day as we have been doing all these months? Rather hard on both of us, don't you think? I do; I feel that way," she said. Again her features quivered. "The kind of feeling I have—for you—would make that rather—difficult!"

His grip tightened on her hands. "I won't give you up!" he said.

"Not if I ask you?"

"You won't!"

"I do!"

He rose and stood looking down at her. "Later you may change your mind. I think you will," he said harshly. He left the room and went out of the house.

Deborah sat there rigid. Then she began trembling. Tears welled in her eyes and rolled down her cheeks. She brushed them angrily away. Struggling to control herself, presently she grew quieter. Frowning, with her clear gray eyes intently staring before her, she did not see her father come into the doorway.

He stopped with a jerk at sight of her face. "What's the matter?" he asked.

She started. "Nothing's the matter! How is Bruce?"

"I don't know. Who went out a few minutes ago?"

"Allan Baird," she answered.

"Oh. You explained to him, of course, about Lake——"

"Yes, he understands," she said. "He won't come here again——"

Roger looked at her sharply. He hesitated. No, he would wait. "Good night," he said, and went up-stairs.

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

Roger Grows "Downright Modern"

ON THE morrow Bruce did not grow better. If anything, the child grew worse. But by the next morning the crisis had passed. In the house the tension relaxed,

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and Roger suddenly felt so weak that he saw his own physician that day and they had a long and serious talk. Later he went to his office, but he gave little heed to his work. Sitting there at his desk, he stared through the window far out over the city. A plan was forming in his mind.

When he reached home in the evening he learned that the baby was still doing well. With a grunt of satisfaction, he went to his room to get ready for dinner.

"May I come in for a moment?" He heard Deborah at the door.

"Yes—come in." He thought of her face as he had seen it after Allan had left her, and now as she came into the room he threw a searching glance her way. She was dressed to go out. She looked tired and pale and rather relaxed. Her voice was quiet as usual.

"What a relief it is," she said, "to have little Bruce so much better to-night." She smiled at him. "This has been quite a drain—on all of us—and I want to make sure you stop worrying now. Whatever the expense may be, I've arranged to meet it all myself. So please just drop it out of your mind." She turned to the door.

"Wait a minute. Come here."

"What is it?" she asked.

Her father looked at her anxiously. "It's this eternal strain," he said, "on you and your plans. I don't like it." He saw the quick tightening of her lips.

"I'll be all right," she muttered.

"You won't be all right," he answered. "Something happened — I'm quite sure —two nights ago between you and Baird."

"Yes," she said sternly, looking down. "But I don't care to talk of that, father dear——"

"Very well," he said, and she went to the door. "You're to be out this evening?"

"Yes."

"NOW," he thought, "we'll waste no time. We're going clear to the bottom of this." And as soon as she was out of the house he telephoned Allan to come at once. "It's something that can't wait," he urged. "There's something I must know right off."

"Very well, I'll come right up."

When Baird arrived a little later, Roger opened the door himself, and they went back into his study.

"Sit down," he said. "Smoke, Allan?"

"No, thanks." As Baird sat down, his lean right hand, supple, lithe, and muscular, closed on the arm of his chair like a vise; and glancing at him Roger thought: "The man's whole body is like that."

"Now then," he began, "there are two things we want to get clear on. The first is about yourself and Deborah. There has been trouble, hasn't there?"

"Yes."

"She has made up her mind not to marry you."

"Yes."

"I guessed as much." And Roger paused. "Do you mind my asking questions?"

"No——"

"Are you still in love with her, Allan?"

"I am."

"And she with you?"

"I think so."

"Then it's the same old trouble."

"Yes." And he told a part of what she had said. As he talked in clear, terse, even tones, his steady eyes had a tortured light, the look of a man who has almost reached the end of his endurance. Roger smoked in silence.

"What do you propose to do?"

"Wait," said Allan, "a few days more. Then try again. If I fail, I'm through."

Roger shot a quick look at him. "I don't think you'll fail, my boy—and what's more I think I can help you. This is a large house, Allan—there's more in it than you know. My second point concerns myself. I'm going to die within a year."

As Baird turned on him suddenly, Roger grimly smiled and said: "We won't go into details now, but I've been examined lately and I have quite positive knowledge of what I've suspected for some time. So far, I have told no one but you. And I'm telling you only because of the bearing it has on my daughter." Roger leaned forward heavily. "I want to see Deborah happy, Baird, more than anything else in the world. She's the one of my daughters who means the most, now that I'm so near the end. When I die next year that may be all—I may simply end—a blank, a grave—I am not sure. But I've made up my mind above everything else to see Deborah happy before I go. And I mean to do it by setting her free—so free that I think it will frighten her."

Roger went on to explain his plan, and they talked together for some time.

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"YOU WILL HAVE YOUR WORK, DEBORAH, TO WHICH YOU WILL BE ABLE TO GIVE YOUR LIFE. BUT I DON'T SEE YOU HAPPY. FOR YOU THERE WILL BE NO FAMILY."

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Another week had soon gone by. Bruce still recovered rapidly, and the other sick children were up and about. Deborah, in the meantime, had barely been in the house at all. But late on Saturday evening Roger found her in her room. She was working. He came behind her.

"What is it, dad?"

"Busy, eh?" He hesitated, then laid his hand on her shoulder with a little affectionate pressure. "You've kept so busy lately," he said, "I haven't had time to see anything of you. How's your work going?"

"Much better, thanks — now that the winter is over."

He questioned her about her schools. And then after a brief pause: "Well, daughter," he said, "it has been a great fight, and I'm proud of you for it. And if I've got anything to say—" his hand was still on her shoulder; he felt her tighten all at once—"it's not by way of criticism—please be sure of that ahead. In this damnable war my faith in things has all been badly shaken up. Humanity seems to me still a child—a child that needs to go to school. God knows we need men and women like you—and I'm proud of all you've accomplished; I'd be the last man to hold you back. All I want to do is to help you go on—by seeing to it that you are free—from anything that can hinder you."

HE STOPPED. He could feel that she was rigid now.

"To begin with," he said, "I understand you're not going to marry Allan Baird."

She stirred slightly: "Did he tell you that?"

"Yes — I asked him," Roger replied. "You had told me *you* weren't ready to talk, and I couldn't wait—I had plans of my own. So I had Allan here a few nights ago, and he told me you had decided to give up your happiness for the sake of all those children in that big family of yours. You felt you must keep yourself free for them—for your work and all your dreams for them. All right, I'm proud of you, Deborah—and I only propose to clear the way." She looked intently up at his face. "You're not free now," he continued. "We have Edith and her children here. And I'm growing old—that has got to be thought of—I don't want to leave them on your hands. So as soon as the baby is well enough, I'm going to move them all up to the mountains—not only for the summer—they are to stay the whole year round. From this time on they're to make it their home."

"Father! But they can't do that! Think of the winters!" Deborah cried. Her deep, sweet voice had a pent-up sound, and her clear gray eyes were watching his with a look of sharpening surprise.

"It's already settled," he answered. "I've talked to Edith and she has agreed. In fact, it's a great relief to her, after all her worries here. She has always loved the farm, and it will be good for her children. She is already making her plans. In the meantime, I've been talking to George. 'George,' I told him, 'I'm going to talk to you, man to man, about a man's job that I want you to tackle.' "

"The farm? But, dearie! He's only a boy!"

"He's nearly seventeen," said Roger, "and a young moose for his age. And old Dave Royce will still be there. It's the job that George has been dreaming about ever since he was a child. You should have seen how he was thrilled by the scheme. I told him we'd spend the whole summer together up there laying all our plans, investing our money carefully to make every dollar count."

"What money?" Deborah sharply asked.

But her father talked steadily on: "We already have a fine lot of cattle. We'll add to it and enlarge the barn and put in some new equipment. In short, we'll put it in fine shape, make it a first-class dairy farm. 'And then, George,' I said to him, 'I'm going to turn it over to you. I shall give the farm to your mother, and all the rest of the money I have I mean to invest in her name down here, so that she'll have a small income until you can make your dairy pay.' "

"What money are you speaking of?" Deborah's voice was thick and hard, her sensitive lips were parted, and she was breathing quickly.

"I've sold the house," he told her.

Convulsively she gripped his arms: "Then tell me where *you* mean to live!"

"I'm not going to live—I'm going to die—very soon—I have definite knowledge."

Without speaking Deborah rose, and all at once her face went white. Her father kept tight hold of her hands, and he felt them trembling, growing cold.

"You're soon to be free of every one,"

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he continued painfully. "I know that this is hurting you, but I see so plain, so plain, my child, just what it is I've got to do. I'm trying to clear the way for you to make a simple, definite choice—a choice that is going to settle your life one way or the other. I want to make sure that you see what you're doing. Because you mean so much to me. We're flesh and blood—eh, my daughter?—and in this family of ours we've been the closest ones of all!"

She seemed to sway a little. "*You're not going to die!*" she whispered.

"So it hurts you to lose me," he replied. "It will be hard to be so free. Would you rather not have had me at all? I've been quite a load on your back, you know. A fearful job you had of it, dragging me up when I was down. And since then Edith and Bruce and the rest—what burdens they've all been at times! What sharp worries, heavy sorrows, days and nights you and I have gone through, when we should have been quietly resting—free—to keep up our strength for our next day's work. Suppose you had missed them, lived alone—would you have worked better? You don't know. But you will know soon—you're to give it a trial. For I've cleared the way—so that if you throw over Baird to be free you shall get the freedom you feel you need!"

"Father! Please! Is this fair? Is this kind?" she asked in a harsh, frightened tone. Her eyes were wet with angry tears.

"This isn't a time to be kind, my dear." His voice was quivering like her own. "I'm bungling it—I'm bungling it—but you must let me stumble along and try to show you what I mean. You will have your work, your crowded schools, to which you'll be able to give your life. But I look ahead, I who know you—and I don't see you happy, I don't even see you whole. For you there will be no family. None of the intimate sorrows and joys that have been in this house will come to you. I look back now and I see them all—for a man who has come so near the end gets a larger vision."

HE SHUT his eyes, his jaw set tight. "I look into my family back and back, and I see how it has been made of many generations. Certain figures stand out in my mind—they cover over a hundred years. And I see how much they've meant to me. I see that I've been one of them—a link in a long chain of lives—all interbound and reaching on. In my life they have all been here—as I shall be in lives to come.

"And this is what I want for you." He held her close a moment. The tears were rolling down her cheeks. "Until now you have been one of us, too. You have never once been free. While you have worked down there in your schools you have always been the one in this house to step in and take hold and try to decide what's best to be done. I'm not putting you up on a pedestal; I don't say you've made no mistakes—but I say you're that kind of a woman, a woman who craves family ties. You're the one of all my daughters who has loved this house the most!"

"Yes," she said, "I've loved this house——"

"But now for you all this will stop—quite suddenly," he told her. "This house of ours will soon be gone. And within a few months I shall be dead, and your family will have dropped out of your life."

"Stop! Can't you? Stop! It's brutal! It isn't true about you!" she cried. "I won't believe it!" Her voice broke.

"Go and see my physician," he said.

"How long have you known it? Why didn't you tell me?"

"Because we had troubles enough as it was, other things to think of. But there's only one thing now, this freedom you are facing."

"Please! Please!" she cried imploringly. "I don't want to talk of myself but of you. This physician——"

"No," he answered with stern pain, "you'll have to hear me out, my child. We're talking of you—of you alone when I am gone. How will it be? Are you quite sure? You will have your work, that vision of yours, and I know how close it has been to you, vivid and warm, almost like a friend. But so was my business once like that, when I was young as you are now. And the business grew and it got cold—impersonal, a mere machine. Thank God I had a family. Isn't your work growing too? Are you sure it won't become a machine? And won't you lose touch with the children then, unless you have a child of your own? Friends won't be enough, you'll find—they're not bound up into yourself. The world may reach a stage at last where we shall live in the lives of all—we may all be one big family. But that time is still far

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off—we hold to our own flesh and blood. And so I'm sure it will be with you. You see, you have been young, my dear, and your spirit has been fresh and new. But how are you going to keep it so, without the ties you've always had?"

He felt the cold clutch of her hand. "*You won't die!*" she whispered.

But he went on relentlessly: "And what will you do without Allan Baird? For you see you have not even *worked* alone. You have had this man who has loved you there. I've seen how much he has helped you—how you have grown and he has grown since you two got together. And if you throw him over now, it seems to me you are not only losing what has done the most for your work, but you're running away from life as well. You've never won by doing that; you've always won by meeting life, never evading it, taking it all, living it full, taking chances! If you marry Baird, I see you both go on together in your work, while in your home you struggle through the troubles, tangles, joys, and griefs that most of us mortals know so well! I see you in a world of children, but with children, too, of your own — to keep your spirit always young! Living on in your children's lives!"

Roger stopped abruptly. He groped for something more to say.

"On the one side, all that," he muttered, "and on the other, a lonely life that will soon grow old."

THERE fell a dangerous silence. And sharply, without warning, the influence, deep and invisible, of many generations of stolid folk in New England made itself felt in each of them. Father and daughter grew awkward, both. The talk had been too emotional. Each made, as by an instinct, a quick, strong effort at self-control, and felt about for some way to get back upon their old easy footing. Roger turned to his daughter. Her head was still bent, her hands clasped tight, but she was frowning down at them now, although her face was still wet with tears. She drew a deep, unsteady breath.

"Well, Deborah," he said simply, "here I've gone stumbling on like a fool. I don't know what I've said or how you have listened."

"I've listened," she said thickly.

"I have tried," he went on in a steadier tone, "to give you some feeling of what is ahead—and to speak for your mother as well as myself. And more than that—for the world has changed since she was here. God knows I've tried to be modern," he said, and a humorous glint came into his eyes. "Downright modern," he went on. "And haven't I been, right here in this talk? Have I asked you to give up your career? Not at all; I've asked you to marry Baird, and go right on with him in your work. And if you can't marry Allan Baird, after all he has done for you, how in God's name can any of you modern women ever marry any one? Now what do you say? Will you marry him? Don't laugh at me! I'm serious! Talk!"

But Deborah was laughing—although her father felt her hands still cold and trembling in his. Her gray eyes, bright and luminous, were shining up into his own.

"What a time you've been having, haven't you, dear!" his daughter cried unsteadily. "Fairly lying awake at night and racking your brains for everything modern I've ever said—to turn it and twist it and use it against me!"

"Well?" he demanded. "How does it twist?"

"It twists hard, thank you," she declared. "You've turned and twisted me about till I barely see how I can live at all!"

"You can, though! Marry Allan Baird!"

"I'll think it over—later on!"

"What is there left to think about? Can you point to one hole in all I've said?"

"Yes, a good many—and one right off!"

"Out with it!"

"You're not dying," Deborah told him calmly. "I feel quite certain you'll live for years."

"Oh, you do, eh?—then see my physician!"

"I will; I'll see him to-morrow. How long did you give yourself? Just a few months?"

"No, he said it might be more," admitted Roger grudgingly. "If I had no worries to wear me all out——"

"Me, you mean."

"Exactly."

"Well, you've worried quite enough. You're going to leave it to me to decide."

"All right," he agreed. He looked at her. "You *have* listened—*hard?*" he gruffly asked.

"Yes." Her hands slowly tightened on his. "But don't speak of this again. You're to leave it to me. You promise?"

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"Yes."

And Roger left her.

He went to bed, but he could not sleep. With a sudden sag in his spirits he felt what a bungler he had been. He was not used to these solemn talks, he told himself irately. What a fool to try it! And how had Deborah taken it all? He did not mind her laughter, nor that lighter tone of hers. It was only her way of ending the talk, an easy way out for both of them. But what had she been thinking underneath, all through his solemn speeches? Had his points gone home? He tried to remember them. Pshaw! He had been too excited, and he could recall scarcely anything now. He had not meant to speak of Baird—he had meant to keep him out of it! Yes, how he must have bungled it all! Doubtless she was smiling still. Even that news about himself she had not taken seriously.

But as he thought about that news, Roger's mood completely changed. The talk of the evening grew remote, his family no longer real, mere little figures, shadowy, receding swiftly far away. . . . Much quieter now, he lay a long time listening to the life of the house, the occasional sounds from the various rooms. From the nursery came Bruce's gay, sweet laugh, and Roger could hear the nurse moving about. After that for a long time he could hear only creaks and breathings. Never had the old house seemed so like a living creature. For nearly forty years it had held all that he had loved and known, all he had been sure of. Here was the life that had been his own, as distinguished from all others. Outside of it was the strange and the new, the uncertain, the vast unknown, stretching away to infinity. . . .

Again he heard Bruce's shrill little laugh. What did it remind him of? He puzzled. Then he had it. Edith had been a baby here. Her cradle had been in this very room, close by the bed. And how she had laughed! What gurgles and ripples of bursting glee! The first child in his family. . . .

ROGER COULD NOT SLEEP. HE FELT WHAT A BUNGLER HE HAD BEEN

CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

The Long Waiting Game Ends

ON THE next day, which was Sunday, Deborah made an appointment with her father's physician, and had a long talk with him at his house. Upon her return she went to her room and stayed there until evening; but when she came down to supper her manner was as usual. At the table she joined in the talk of Edith and the children, already deep in their

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preparations for the move up to the farm. George could hardly wait to start. That life would be a change indeed in Edith's plans for her family, and as they talked about it now the tension of hostility that had so long existed between the two sisters passed away. Each knew that the clash had come to an end, that they would live together no more; and as though in remorse, they drew close, Deborah with her suggestions, Edith in her friendly way of taking and discussing each one. Then Deborah went again to her room. Her room was just over Roger's, and waking several times in the night he heard his daughter moving about.

The next day she was up early, and off to her school before he came down. It was a fine spring morning, Roger had had a good night's sleep, and as he walked to his office he felt buoyed up by a feeling both of hope for his daughter and of solid satisfaction in himself as he remembered all that he had said to her. Curiously enough, he could recall every word of it now. Every point that he had made rose up before him, vivid and clear. How clear he had been, how simple and true, and yet with what a tremendous effect he had piled the points one on the other!

"By George!" he thought with a little glow, "for a fellow who's never been in a pulpit I put up a devilish strong appeal." And he added sagely: "Now let it work on her; give it a chance. She'll come out of this all right. This idea some fellows have, that every woman is born a fool, isn't fair, it isn't true. Just let a line of argument be presented to her strong and clear—straight from the shoulder—by some man——"

And again with a tingle of pleasure his mind recurred to his sermon. His pleasures had been few of late, so he dwelt on this little glow of pride and made the most of it while it was here.

AT THE office, as he entered his room, he stopped with a slight shock of surprise. John, standing on his crutches in front of a large table there, had been going through the morning's mail, sorting out the routine letters Roger did not need to see. To-day he had just finished and was staring at the window. The light fell full on his sallow face and showed an amazing happiness there. At Roger's step he started.

"Well, Johnny, how goes it this morning?"

"Fine, thank you," was the prompt reply. And John hobbled briskly over to his typewriter in the corner. Roger sat down at his desk. As he did so he glanced again at the cripple and felt a little pang of regret. "What will become of him," he asked, "when I close out my business?" He still thought of him as a mere boy, for looking at the small crooked form it was difficult to remember that John was twenty years of age. The lad had worked like a Trojan of late. Even Roger, engrossed as he had been in family anxieties, had noticed it in the last few weeks. He would have to make some provision for John. Deborah would see to it.

Roger went slowly through his mail. One letter was from the real-estate firm through which he was selling the house. The deal had not been closed as yet; there were certain points still to be settled. So Roger called John to his desk and dictated a reply. When he finished there was a brief pause.

"That's all," said Roger gruffly.

"So you're sellin' the house," John ventured.

"Yes."

The lad limped back to his corner and went to work at his machine. But presently he came over again and stood there waiting awkwardly.

"What is it, Johnny?" Roger inquired, without looking up.

"Say, Mr. Gale," the boy began, in a carefully casual tone, "would you mind talking business a minute or two?"

"No. Fire ahead."

"Well, sir, you've had your own troubles lately; you haven't had much time for things here. The last time you went over the books was nearly a couple of weeks ago." John paused and his look was portentous.

"Well," asked Roger, "what about it? Business been picking up any since then?"

"Yes, sir," was the answer. "We didn't lose a cent last week! We made money. Fifteen dollars!"

"Good Lord, Johnny, we're getting rich!"

"But that's nothing," John continued. "The fact of the matter is, Mr. Gale, that I've been working lately on a new line I thought of. And now it's got a-going so fast it's getting clean away from me!" Again he stopped and swallowed hard.

"Out with it, then," said Roger.

"I got it from the war," said John. "The

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papers are still half full of war news, and that's what's keeping our business down—because we ain't adopting ourselves to the new war conditions. So I figured it like this: Say there are a million people over here in America who've got either friends or relations in the armies over there. Say that all of 'em want to get news—not just this stuff about the war, but real live news of what's happened to Bill. Has Bill still got his legs and arms? Can he hold down a job when he gets home? News that counts for something! See? A big new market! Business for us! So I tried to see what I could do." John excitedly shifted his crutches.

Roger was watching intently now. "Go on, Johnny."

"Sure I'll go on! One night I went to a library where they have English papers. I went over their files for about a month. I took one Canadian regiment—see?—and traced it through, and I got quite a story. Then I used some of the money I've saved and bought a whole bunch of papers. I piled 'em up in the room where I sleep and went through 'em nights. I hired two kids to help me. Well, Mr. Gale, the thing worked fine. In less than a week I had any amount of little bunches of clippings. See how I mean? Each bunch was the story of one regiment for a month. So I knew we could deliver the goods!

"Well, that was about ten days ago. And then I went after the market. I went to a man that I met last year in an advertising office, and for fifty dollars we put an ad in the Sunday *Times*. After that there was nothing to do but wait. The next day—nothing doing! I was here at seven-thirty and I went through every mail all day. Not a single answer to my ad—and I thought I was busted! But Tuesday morning there was three, with five-dollar checks inside of 'em! That afternoon there was two more and the next day eleven! By the end of last week there was forty-six! Friday I put in another ad and there's been over seventy more since then! That makes a hundred and twenty in all—six hundred dollars! And I'm swamped! I ain't done nothing yet, I've just kept 'em all—all the orders—for you to see!"

He went quickly to the table, gathered a pile of letters there, and brought them all to Roger's desk. Roger glanced over a few of them, dazed. Then he looked into John's shrewd face, where mingled devotion and triumph and business zeal were shining.

"Johnny," he said huskily, "you've adopted my business and no mistake."

John swallowed again and scowled with joy. "Let's figure it out!" he proposed.

"We will!"

They were at it all day, laying their plans, "adopting" the work of the office to the new conditions. They found they would need a larger force, including a French and a German translator. They placed other ads in the papers. They forgot to have lunch and worked steadily on, till the outer rooms were all empty and still. At last they were through. Roger put on his cuffs, then went and got his coat and hat.

"Say, Mr. Gale," John asked him, "how about this letter—the one you dictated this morning to that firm about your house?"

Roger turned and looked at him. "Throw it into the basket," he said. "We'll write 'em another to-morrow and tell 'em that we've changed our minds." He paused for just a moment, and then he added bruskly: "If this goes through as I hope it will, I guess you'd better come into the firm."

And he left the room abruptly. Behind him there was not a sound.

AT HOME in his study, that evening, he made some more calculations. Within a few weeks he'd have money enough to start Edith and her family in their new life on the farm. For the present, at least, the house was safe.

"Why, father!" Edith came into the room. "I didn't know you had come home. What kept you so long at the office?" she asked.

"Oh, business, my dear——"

"Have you had any supper?"

"No, and I'd like some," he replied.

"I'll see to it myself," she said. Edith was good at that sort of thing, and the supper she brought was delicious. He ate it with keen relish. Then he went back to his study and picked up a book, an old favorite. He started to read, but presently dozed. The book dropped from his hands and he fell asleep.

He wakened with a start, and saw Deborah looking down at him. For a moment he stared up, as he came to his senses, and in his daughter's clear gray eyes he thought he saw a happiness that set his heart to beating fast.

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"Well?" he questioned huskily.

"We're to be married right away."

He stared a moment longer: "Oh, I'm so glad, so glad, my dear. I was afraid you—" He stopped short.

Deborah bent close to him, and he felt her squeeze his arm. "I've been over and over all you said," she told him in a low, sweet voice. "I had a good many ups and downs. But I'm all through now; I'm sure you were right." And she pressed her cheek to his. "Oh, dad, dad, it's such a relief! And I'm so happy! . . . Thank you, dear."

"Where is Allan?" he asked presently.

"I'll get him," she said. She left the room, and in a moment Allan's tall, ungainly form appeared in the doorway.

"Well, Allan, my boy," Roger cried.

"Oh, Roger Gale," said Allan softly. He was wringing Roger's hand.

"So she decided to risk you, eh?" Roger said unsteadily. "Well, Baird, you look like a devilish risk for a woman like her—who has the whole world on her back as it is——"

"I know—I know—and how rash she has been! Only two years, and her mind was made up!"

"But that's like her—that's our Deborah—always acting like a flash——"

"Stop acting like children!" Deborah cried. "And be sensible and listen to me! We're to be married to-morrow morning——"

"Why to-morrow?" Roger asked.

"Because," she said decidedly, "there's been enough fuss over this affair. So we'll just be married and have it done. And when Edith and the children go up next week to the mountains, we want to move right into this house."

"This house?" exclaimed her father.

"I know—it's sold," she answered. "But we're going to get a lease. We'll see the new owner and talk him around."

"Then you'll have to talk *your father* around——"

"*You* around?" And Deborah stared. "You mean to say you're not going to sell?"

"I do," said Roger blithely. And he told them the story of John's new scheme. "And if things turn out in the office as I hope they will," he ended, "we won't have to sell the house at all. And as soon as we've cleared the mortgage, it's going to be your wedding-gift—from the new firm to the new family."

Deborah choked a little: "Allan! What do you think of us now?"

And with a smile in his steady eyes, "I think," he answered, in a drawl, "that we'd better try to persuade the new firm to live with the new family."

"We will, and the sooner the better," she said.

"I'm going up to the mountains," said Roger.

"Yes, but you're coming back in the fall, and when you do you're coming here! And you're going to live here years and years!"

"You're forgetting my doctor."

"Not at all. I had a long talk with him Sunday, and I know just what I'm saying."

"You don't look it, my dear," said Roger, "but of course you may be right. If you take the proper care of me here, and John keeps booming things for the firm——"

"And George makes a huge success of the farm," Deborah added quickly.

"And Deborah of teaching the world——"

"Oh, Allan, hush up!"

"Look here," he said. "You go up-stairs and tell Edith all this. Your father and I want to be alone."

And when the two men were left alone, they smoked and said nothing. They smiled at each other.

"It's hard to decide," grunted Roger at last. "Which did it—my wonderful sermon or your own long waiting game? I'm inclined to think it was the game. For any other man but you—with all you've done, without any talk—no, sir, there wouldn't have been a chance. For she's modern, Baird, she's modern. And I'm going to live just as long as I can, just to see what happens here."

THE next night in his study, how quiet it was! Edith was busy packing up-stairs, Deborah and Allan were gone. Thoughts drifted slowly across his mind. Well, she was married, the last of his daughters, the one whom he cared most for, the one who had taken the heaviest risks. And this was the greatest risk of all. For although she had put it happily out of her thoughts for the moment, Roger knew the old troublesome question was still there in Deborah's mind. The tenement children or her own, the big family or the small? He still felt there would be struggles ahead. And with a kind of wistfulness he tried to see into

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the future here, into the life that would come to his house.

He gave a sudden start in his chair. "By George!" he thought. "They forgot the ring!"

Scowling, he tried to remember. Yes, in the brief simple service that day, in which so much had been omitted—music, flowers, wedding-gown—even the ring had been left out. Why? Not from any principle—he knew that they were not such fools. No, they had simply forgotten it, in the haste of getting married at once. Well, by thunder, for a girl whose father had been a collector of rings for the best part of his natural life, it was pretty shabby, to say the least! Then he recollected that he, too, had forgotten it. And this quieted him immediately.

"I'll get one, though," he promised himself. "And no plain wedding-ring, either. I'll make A. Baird attend to that. No, I'll get her a ring worth while."

He sank deep in his chair and took peace to his soul by thinking of the ring he would choose. And this carried his thoughts back over his life. For there had been so many rings. . . .

"I AIN'T DONE NOTHING YET," SAID JOHNNY. "I'VE JUST KEPT ALL THE ORDERS FOR YOU TO SEE!"

CHAPTER FORTY

Into the Mountains

IT WAS a clear, beautiful afternoon toward the end of May. And as the train, puffing up the grade, wound along the Connecticut River, Roger sat looking out of the window. The orchards were pink and white on the hills. Slowly the day wore away. The river narrowed, the hills reared high, and in the sloping meadows gray ribs and shoulders of granite appeared. The air had a tang of the mountains now. Everywhere were signs of spring, of new vigor and fresh life.

But the voices at each station sounded drowsier than at the last, the eyes appeared more stolid, and to Roger it felt like a journey far back into old ways of living, old beliefs and old ideals. He had always had this feeling, and always he had relished it, this dive into his boyhood. But it was different to-day, for this was more than a journey—it was a migration, too. Close about him in the car were Edith and her children, bound for a new home up there in the very heart and stronghold of all old things in America.

Old things dear to Edith's heart. As she sat by the window, staring out, he watched her shapely little hand; he noted the hardening lines on her brow, the gray in her light, glossy hair. It had been no easy move for her, this; she'd shown pluck to take it so quietly. He saw her smile a little, then frown and go on with her thinking. What was she thinking about, he wondered—all she had left behind in New York, or the rest of her life that lay ahead? She had always longed for things simple and old. Well, she would have them now with a vengeance, summer and winter, the year round, in the battered frame house on the mountainside, the birthplace of her family.

A recollection came to him of a summer's dusk two years ago, and a woman with a lawn-mower cutting the grass on the family graves. Would Edith ever be like that, a mere custodian of the past? If she did, he

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thought, she would be false to the very traditions she tried to preserve. For her forefathers had never been mere guardians of things gone by. Always they had been pioneers. That house had not been old to them, but a thrilling new adventure. Their old homes they had left behind, far down in the valleys to the east. And even those valley homes had been new to the rugged men come over the sea. Would Edith ever understand? Would she see that for herself the new must emerge from her children, from the ideas, desires, and plans already teeming in their minds? Would she show keen interest, sympathy? Would she be able to keep her hold?

In the seat behind her mother, Betsy was sitting with Bruce in her lap, looking over a picture-book. Quietly Roger watched the girl.

"What are you going to be?" he asked. "A woman's college president, a surgeon, or a senator, when the women get the vote? Or will you be an actress and go into the movies? And what will your mother think of you then? Or will you suddenly decide to marry an anarchist and settle down?"

They changed cars, and on a train made up of antiquated coaches they wound through a side valley, down which rushing and tumbling came the river that bore Roger's name. He went into the smoking-car, and presently George joined him there. George did not smoke, but he'd bought some gum and he was chewing absorbedly. Plainly the lad was excited over the great life and work which he saw opening close ahead. Roger glanced at the boy's broad shoulders, noticed the eager lines of his jaw, looked down at his enormous hands, unformed as yet, ungainly; but in them was a hungriness that caused a glow in Roger's breast. One more of the family starting out.

"It's all going to depend on you," Roger gravely counseled. "Your whole life will depend on the start you make. Either you're going to settle down and be like most of your neighbors up there, or you're going to hustle, plan out your day, keep on with your studies and go to college—the State Agricultural College, I mean. In short, keep up to date, my boy, and become in time a big figure in farming."

"I'm going to do it," George replied.

His grandfather glanced again at his face, so scowling, so determined. And a gleam of compassion and yearning came for a moment in Roger's eyes. His heavy hand lay on George's knee.

"That's right, son," he grunted. "Make the family proud of you—eh? I'll do all I can to help you. My business is picking up, thank God, and I'll be able to back you now. I'll stay up here a good part of the summer. We've both got a lot to learn—and not only from books—we want to remember there's plenty to learn from the neighbors, too. Take old Dave Royce, for instance, who when all is said and done has worked our farm for twenty odd years and never once run me into debt."

"But gee!" demurred George, "He's so 'way out of date!"

"I know he is, son, but we've got to go slow." And Roger's look passed furtively along the faces in the car. "We don't want to forget," he warned, "that this is still New England. Every new idea we have we want to go easy with, snake it in."

"I've got an awful lot of 'em," the boy muttered hungrily.

AT THE farm, the next morning at daybreak, Roger was awakened by the sound of George's voice. It was just beneath his window.

"But cattle are only part of it, Dave," the boy declared, in earnest tones, "just part of what we can have up here. Think what we've got—over three hundred acres! And we want to make every acre count! We want to get in a whole lot more of hogs—Belted Hampshires, if we can afford 'em—and a couple of hundred hens. White Leghorns ought to fill the bill. Of course that's just a starter. I've got a scheme for some incubators—electric—run by the dynamo that we'll put in down by the dam. And we can do wonders with bees, too, Dave—I've got a book on 'em I'd like you to read. And besides, there's big money in squab these days. Rich women in New York hotels eat thousands of 'em every night. And ducks, of course, and turkeys. I'd like a white gobbler right at the start, if we knew where we could get one cheap." The voice broke off and there was a pause. "We can do an awful lot with this place."

Then Dave's deep drawl: "That's so, George—yes, I guess that's so. Only we don't want to fool ourselves. That ain't Noah's Ark over thar—it's a barn. And just for a starter, if I was you—" Here

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Dave deliberated. "Of course it's none of my business," he said; "it's for you and your grandfather to decide—and I don't propose to interfere in what ain't any of my affair——"

"Yes, yes, Dave, sure! That's all right! But go on! *What*, just for a starter?"

"Cows," came the tranquil answer. "I've been hunting around since you wrut me last month. And I know of three good milkers!"

"Three? Why, Dave, I wrote we want thirty or forty!"

"Yes—you wrut," Dave answered. "But I've druv all around these parts—and there ain't but three that I can find. And I ain't so sure of that third one. She looks like she might——"

George cut in: "But you only had a buggy, Dave! Gee! I'm going to have a Ford!" There was a sudden silence.

"That so, George?"

"You bet it's so! And we'll go on a cow hunt all over the state!"

"Well—I dunno but what you're right," Dave responded cautiously. "You *might* get more cows if you had a Ford—an' got so you could run it. Yes, I guess that's a pretty good scheme. I believe in being conservative, George—but I dunno now but what a Ford——"

Their voices passed from under the window, and Roger relaxed and smiled to himself. It was a good beginning, he thought.

They bought a Ford soon after that, at the agency in the county-seat, and in the next few weeks of June they searched the farms for miles around. To Roger's surprise he found many signs of a new life stirring there—the farmers buying "autos" and improved machinery, reading new farm-journals and thinking of new processes. Many were sending their boys to college, some were even going themselves for short terms in the winter months. And down in the lower valleys they found several big stock-farms, most decidedly modern affairs. There, walking about and questioning, searching for answers to all the objections raised by Dave at every step, by the end of June they had doubled their herd. At one such place the man in charge took a fancy to George and asked him to drop over often.

"You bet I'll drop over often!" George replied, as he climbed excitedly into his Ford. "I want to see more of those milking machines! We're going to have 'em some day ourselves! A dynamo too!"

And at home, down by the ruined mill he set about rebuilding the dam.

Roger felt himself growing stronger now. His sleeps were sound, and his appetite had come back to a surprising degree. The mountain air had got into his blood and George's warm vigor into his soul. One afternoon, watching the herd come home, some forty huge animals swinging along with a slow, heavy power in their limbs, he breathed the strong, sweet scent of them upon the fresh, keen mountain breeze. George came running by them and stopped a moment by Roger's side, watching closely and eagerly every animal as it passed. And Roger looked at George's face. The herd passed on and George followed behind, his collie dog leaping and barking beside him. And Roger looked up at a billowy cloud resting on a mountain top and wondered whether after all that New York doctor had been right.

He followed the herd into the barn. In two long rows, the great heads of the cattle turned hungrily, lowing and sniffing deep, breathing harshly, stamping, as the fodder-cart came down the lines. What a splendidly wholesome work for a lad, growing up with his roots in the soil, in these massive, simple forces of life.

What of Edith's other children? Would they be willing to stay here long?

Each morning Roger breakfasted with Bruce, the baby, by his side.

"What a thing for you, little lad," he thought, "if you could live here all your days! But will you? Will you want to stay? Won't you, too, get the fever as I did, for the city?"

In the joyous, shining, mysterious eyes of the baby he found no reply. He had many long talks with Betsy, who was eager to go away to school, and with Bob and little Tad, who were going to school in the village that fall. And the feeling came to Roger that surely he would see these lives, at least for many years ahead. They were so familiar and so real, so fresh and filled with hopes and dreams. And he felt himself so a part of them all.

BUT one morning, climbing the steep upper field to a spring George wanted to show him, Roger suddenly swayed, turned faint. He caught hold of a boulder on the

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wall and held himself rigid, breathing hard. It passed, and he looked at his grandson. But the boy had turned and his clear brown eyes were fixed on a fallow field below. Wistfully Roger watched his face. They both stood motionless for a long time.

As the summer drew slowly to a close, Roger spent many quiet hours alone by the copse of birches, where the glory of autumn was already stealing in and out among the tall, slender stems of the trees. And he thought of the silent winter there, and of the spring that would come again, and the long, fragrant summer. And he watched the glow on the mountains above and the rolling splendors of the clouds. At dusk he heard the countless voices of animals, birds, and insects, murmuring up from all the broad valley, then gradually sinking to deep repose, many never to awake again. And the span of his life, from the boyhood which he could recall so vividly here among these children, seemed brief to him as a summer's day, only a part of a mighty whole made up of the innumerable lives, the many generations, of his family, his own flesh and blood, come out of a past he could never know, and going on without him now, branching, dividing, widening out to what his eyes would never see.

Vaguely he pictured them groping their way, just as he himself had done. It seemed to Roger that all his days he had been only entering life, as some rich, bewildering thicket like this copse of birches here, never getting very deep, never seeing very clearly, never understanding all. He had always been just starting to. And so it had been with his children, and so it was now with these children of Edith's, and so it would be with those many others—always groping, blundering, starting—children, only children all. And yet what lives they were to lead, what joys and revelations and disasters would be theirs, in that strange remote world they would live in—"my flesh and blood that I never shall know."

But the stars were quiet and serene. The meadows and the forests on the broad sweep of the mountainside took on still brighter, warmer hues. And there was no gloom in these long good-bys.

On a frosty night in September, he left the farm to go to the city. From his seat in the small automobile Roger looked back at the house and the farm, at the brightly lighted windows, and high above them a last glow on the mountain top. Then he turned to George by his side. "We're in good shape for the winter," he said. But George did not get his meaning.

At the little station, there were no other passengers. They walked the platform for some time. Then the train with a scream came around the curve. A quick grip on George's hand, and Roger climbed into the car. Inside, a moment later, he looked out through the window. By a trainman with a lantern, George stood watching, smiling up, and he waved his hand as the train pulled out.

*The last instalment of "**His Family**" will appear in the May number.*

MY SHIPS

By WILL THOMPSON

THE swing of the sea I would bring back with me,
In the ring of my verse, where the wild waves rehearse.
I would music embalm of the wind-tossed palm,
Bright night-water pour by a flame-colored shore.

My songs and my ships—o'er the foam each one slips,
Full sail on the way to the Port of Good Day.
They must sail on and on, with their cargoes of dawn,
To the Kingdom of Rest in the purple-eyed West.

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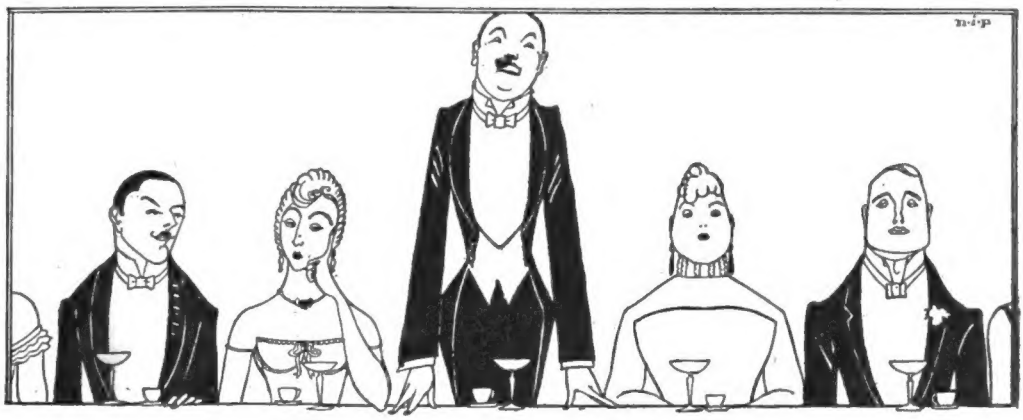


UNDER THE SPREADING CHESTNUT TREE

EDITOR'S NOTE—Though the sign is the Chestnut Tree, no story is barred by its youth. We will gladly pay for available ones. Address all manuscripts to "The Chestnut Tree," enclosing stamped, addressed envelope.

IN HAMMOND, Indiana, a Hungarian applied for naturalization papers the other day, and the following dialogue ensued:

CLERK: Who is President of the United States?

HUNG.: Meester Vilson.

CLERK: Who makes the laws?

HUNG.: De Kungress.

CLERK: Who elects the President?

HUNG. (*without batting an eye*): Kalifohrnea. He got his papers.

"NO," COMPLAINED the Scotch professor to his students; "ye dinna use your faculties of observation. Ye dinna use them. For instance——"

Picking up a jar of chemicals of vile odor he stuck one finger into it and then into his mouth.

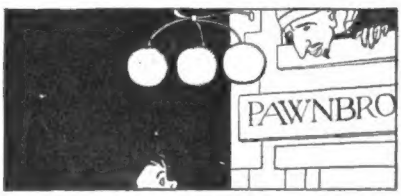
"Taste it, gentlemen!" he commanded as he passed the vessel from student to student.

After each one had licked his finger, and had felt rebellion through his whole soul, the old professor exclaimed triumphantly:

"I tol' ye so. Ye dinna use your faculties. For if ye had observed ye would ha' seen that the finger I stuck into the jar was nae the finger I stuck into my mouth."

THE tailor's sign in a little inland town was an apple, simply an apple. The people were amazed at it. They came in crowds to the tailor, asking him what on earth the meaning of the sign was.

The tailor, with a complacent smile, replied: "If it hadn't been for an apple, where would the clothing business be to-day?"



A PAWNBROKER was rudely awakened in the middle of the night by a furious knocking at his front door. Much frightened, he opened the window and looked out.

"Wh-wh-what's the matter?" he asked breathlessly.

"Come down," demanded the stranger.

"Who are——"

"Come down!" interrupted the other.

The pawnbroker hastened down-stairs and peeped around the door. "Now, sir," he demanded.

"I wan'sh to know the time?" said the bibulous one.

"You infernal rascal! Do you mean to say you woke me up for that? How dare you?"

The midnight visitor looked injured.

"Well, you've got my watch," he explained.

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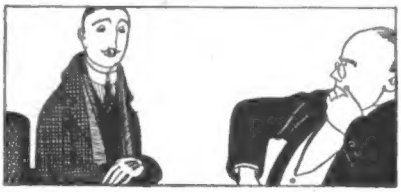
A WESTERN newspaper sent one of its staff correspondents to a distant city to get an interview. This reporter was not only somewhat forgetful, but addicted at times to indulge in the overflowing bowl.

Shortly after the correspondent reached his destination, the Managing Editor received this telegram from him:

"Have forgotten the man's name."

The Managing Editor wired back:

"The man's name is Jones. Your name is Smith."



WITH fear and trembling he approached the doctor. "I know there's something wrong with my heart, doctor. I have a feeling that I'm not going to live very long."

"Nonsense! Give up smoking."

"Never smoked in my life, doctor."

"Well, stop drinking."

"I am a total abstainer from alcoholic drink."

"Well, try going to bed earlier; get more sleep."

"I'm always in bed by nine o'clock."

"Oh, well, all I can say is, my dear sir, that I think you had better let nature take its course. You're altogether too good for this world."

A NEGRO was recently brought into police court in a little town in Georgia, charged with assault and battery. The negro, who was well known to the judge, was charged with having struck another "unbleached American" with a brick. After the usual preliminaries the judge inquired:

"Why did you hit this man?"

"Jedge, he called me a damn black rascal."

"Well, you are one, aren't you?"

"Yessah I *is* one. But, Jedge, s'pose somebody'd call you a damn black rascal, wouldn't you hit 'em?"

"But I'm not one, am I?"

"Naw, sah, naw, sah, you ain't one; but s'pose somebody'd call you de kind o' rascal you *is*, what'd you do?"

"THE most concise and bitterly sarcastic dramatic criticism that I ever read," related the actor, "was that which appeared in a Texas newspaper, in the course of an engagement in Galveston of a company with which I was associated at that time.

"The morning after our début in Galveston, I picked up a local sheet, and as I glanced through its pages my attention was attracted to a short paragraph bearing the head of 'Current News Items.'

"They read:

" 'Hailstorm in Langtry, fifteen minutes.

" 'Windstorm in Houston, two days.

" 'Barnstorm in Galveston Opera House, one night.' "

A YOUNG fellow at the club was talking to an old and conservative member with reference to criminal procedure, when he observed:

"I see there's some talk in this state upon the question of abolishing capital punishment. Would you vote to abolish it?"

"I would not," was the decided reply of the old chap. "Capital punishment was good enough for my ancestors, and it's good enough for me!"

"COME, come," said the impatient conductor to the man who was searching his pockets, "you couldn't have lost your ticket, you know."

"Couldn't, eh?" said the passenger. "I lost a bass drum once."

HE WORSHIPED her, and with all his youthful ardor he begged her to marry him.

"That's all very well, Jack, all very pretty, but do you think we can live on love and kisses?"

"It's much the safest—everything else is either adulterated or poisoned or tainted!" he exclaimed.

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